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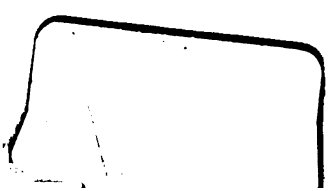

A

WINTER IN LONDON;

OR,

SKETCHES OF FASHION:

A NOVEL,

IN TWO VOLUMES,

BY T. S. SURR.

"Truths like these
Will none offend whom 'tis a praise to please."

YOUNG.

VOL. I.

BALTIMORE:

PUBLISHED BY KID & THOMAS,

MARKET STREET.

1808.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

COUNTESS OF MOIRA.

Madam,

AMONG the Illustrious Few, who in recent times have merited the title of Patrons of Literature, the name of the Earl of Moira stands pre-eminent in honour. That Name will be recognized by posterity with as grateful a veneration for the encouragement it has bestowed on science and the arts, as for the valour which has distinguished it in the camp or the wisdom which has characterized it in the senate.

Permit me then, Madam, to solicit, for a production in the humblest walk of literature, the sanction of the Countess of Moira, whose amiable virtues and brilliant accomplishments add a lustre to the rank in which she was born, and to that Name which is now honoured in her Person.

I am sensible that I incur the charge of presumption, by offering to your Ladyship a trifle so little worthy of the noble Patroness I have

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selected; but I trust that the condescension which is synonymous with the name of Moira, will graciously receive even this humble testimony of the profound respect with which I have the honour to subscribe myself

Your Ladyship's

Most obedient

And most humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following pages have been written under a conviction that the object of the reader who may honour them with a perusal is amusement; and if the author is in any degree so successful as to accomplish that, he readily relinquishes every loftier aim.

While, however, he dissents from the opinion of those who consider a novel chiefly as a vehicle for instruction, he is far from cherishing an indifference relative to the moral effects to be produced on the mind, even by a work of mere amusement. With the desire to entertain principally in view, he has at the same time been studious to guard against conveying or strengthening any impression in the slightest degree unfavourable to the cause of virtue: for he would rather, infinitely rather, be classed with the dull than the immoral.

The favour which has been bestowed on two former attempts of the author has rather increased than diminished the anxiety inseparable from an appeal to public opinion; while the liberality which gave birth to the present production, creates in the breast of the writer a sincere wish for its remuneration in addition to that anxiety.

London,
January, 1806.

A

WINTER IN LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

A STORM.

IT was that season of the year, when evening "fills the lap of Earth with sallow leaves." A sultry day was ended; and as night advanced, the appearance of the heavens denoted an approaching storm. The moon had risen amid black clouds, which, floating in various directions, now admitted streams of momentary light, and now spread wide a still and dreary darkness.

Among the many, who with anxious eyes watched the dread birth of the impending tempest, thinking on friends exposed to its relentless rage, was one, whose lot in life was lowly, but whose heart was dignified by the genuine impressions of conjugal and maternal love.

Her husband, an industrious fisherman, and her eldest boy had been out at sea all day; and, by long-practised reckoning, dame Laurence calculated that their little bark was still too far from home.

She was sitting at the window of her humble hut, which commanded a wide view of the ocean, when

suddenly a vivid flash of lightning darted across the gloom, and was succeeded by a tremendous crash of thunder. Rain fell in torrents, the wind howled dreadfully, and the foaming billows of the ocean bounded and recoiled with horrible concussion.

Instinctively the mother snatched her sleeping infant from her knees, and nestled it closely in her bosom.—"God send thy father safe home, my dear babe!" exclaimed she; and the prayer of her heart was accorded.

About ten minutes after the commencement of the storm, in an interval between the roaring of the winds and waves, the well-known signal of the boat's arrival struck her delighted ear. She answered it by placing a light in the window; then laying her infant in its wooden cradle, she hastened to prepare the comforts of a humble hearth for its master. The crackling faggot blazed, and the flames, reflected from the white-washed walls, served as an additional beacon to the fatigued and wet mariners without, who soon entered their comfortable home. "Well Kate!" "Dear George!" and several hearty kisses introduced this happy pair to each other; while their son, a fine lad of fourteen, throwing off his wet cap and jacket, stooped down softly to kiss his little sister in the cradle.

In a trice their meal smoked on the table, where health and content administered to these children of labour enjoyment more exquisite than results from all the pleasures which art invents for the victims of opulent indolence.

The storm still raged; but the situation of their

dwelling, and their habits of life, had rendered such scenes common to this family; and they would perhaps have sunk to sleep wholly unmindful of its violence, had not their apprehensions been awakened for the fate of their fellow-creatures exposed to those dangers from which they had been providentially delivered.

They had finished their repast, and dame Laurence had filled with tobacco her good man's pipe, which he was in the act of applying to his lips, when the firing of minute guns proclaimed some ship in danger.

Letting fall his pipe, and striking the table with his hand,—"That's the Indiaman we saw making signals for a pilot, Jem,—my life on't!" exclaimed Laurence.

"I dare say 'tis, father," said Jem. "And if it is, boy, Lord have mercy upon the crew! for she's in no plight to weather such a gale as this."

"Poor souls!" said dame Laurence. The guns continued firing incessantly and irregularly, denoting the increasing peril of the vessel.

Laurence's hut was situated on a solitary spot, close to the sea, on the Sussex coast, not far from Brighton. With that prompt humanity which characterizes the English mariner, he and his son flew instantly to the beach with lights.

On a sudden, however, the firing ceased, and nothing was heard but the dreadful howlings of the storm.

"They're gone! They're gone!" exclaimed Laurence, "and the Lord have mercy on their souls!"

As he spake a brilliant flash of lightning illumined for a moment the expanse of ocean, and at a considerable distance they descried a small boat crowded with human beings. They now redoubled their efforts; they kept up their fires in defiance of the rain and wind; they hoisted out poles with lanterns affixed to them, and put in practice every method which they could devise, to add to the chance of rescuing their fellow creatures from impending dissolution.

In a few minutes, however, their benevolent zeal was chilled, and their generous hopes annihilated. Loud, horrid shrieks, piercing their ears and hearts, proclaimed the fate of those whom they had vainly hoped to succour. Yet, still reluctant to believe the worst, they lingered nearly another hour on the beach, and kept up the signals of their lanterns and fires.

At length, drenched with rain, fatigued, and dejected, they returned to their hut, wondering with simplicity at the ways of the Omnipotent, yet piously acknowledging his wisdom and his love.

Scarcely had they thrown off their wet garments, and once more seated themselves by the fire, when a loud tapping at their window again alarmed them. Dame Laurence opened the casement, screamed with terror, and fell, half fainting, into her chair; while the fisherman lifting up the latch, the object which so terrified his wife entered the hut.

It was an object whose sudden appearance, under such circumstances might have occasioned a momentary terror to stronger intellects than those of poor dame Laurence. A tall thin figure, whose skin was

of the darkest bronze, with no other covering than a pair of trowsers, and whose long black hair hung wet upon his back, stood before them holding in his arms a little infant apparently deprived of life. Terror, surprise, and every other feeling, fled before the instinct of humanity, which warmed the hearts of the Laurences. No verbal appeal was necessary to arouse their efforts. All the exertions that their humble skill suggested, and all the means which their scanty stores afforded, were promptly used for the re-animation of the little stranger; and they at length received the inestimable remuneration of success. They were blessed with the joy of beholding the little lips of the babe quiver with returning life, and saw his beauteous eyes open again to light.

Relieved in some degree from their incessant attention to the infant by these symptoms of his recovery, the Laurences had leisure to survey minutely his preserver. He was one of that class of the natives of China who are sometimes hired to assist in the navigation of ships from India. His long black hair, hanging over his shoulder, swept the brick floor on which he sat reclining his head upon his hand. He seemed to suffer pain; but as he could not utter a syllable of English, the poor creature endured his agonies with sullen silence, having obstinately resisted, with violent gestures every importunity of the Laurences that he would take such restoratives as they possessed.

Dame Laurence having changed the infant's wet clothes, which were of the finest sort, for such

coarse linen as her own child wore, now placed him in her bed, which stood in a corner of the room. The recovered little urchin smiled in her face, as in conscious gratitude for her care. "Thou be'st a lovely babe," cried the kind-hearted woman, "and I'll be bound art some grand body's child.—These check things of my Sally's are wide different from what you wore last, to be sure; and these rough sheets are not such as you're used to;—but though they ben't hollands, nor laces, nor lawns, they will keep thee warm from the weather, poor darling! and so God bless thee, I say!"

As she spake she kissed the little creature, who, ignorant alike of the losses it had sustained, and the dangers it had escaped, slumbered as peacefully as if it reposed on down, and had been rocked to rest by a watching mother.

The Chinese, meanwhile, continued to exhibit symptoms of increasing pain: he threw himself at full length upon the floor, placed both his hands upon his head, and from his gestures gave reason to conclude that in his escape from the wreck he had received some injury which threatened to be fatal.

The Laurences became alarmed. It was now considerably past the midnight hour, and their hut was a mild distant from any other habitation. Should he die, what account could they give of the child! If his life could be saved till the morning only, some of the gentry at Brighton might understand his language, and learn to whom the poor baby belonged. But if it should prove that these two were all that

were saved from the wreck, and the *China-man* should die; what was to become of the poor little boy!

Such was the argument of the fisherman, who at one moment was on the point of setting out for Brighton immediately, and the next declined it till the morning. With much difficulty they at length prevailed over the poor creature's obstinacy so far as to force a small quantity of spirits into his mouth, and placed him on a bed by the fire. He still, however, remained sullen, and apparently insensible, betraying no symptoms of anxiety either about his own fate, or that of the infant. In this state he continued during the remainder of the night. Laurence and his son, who were exhausted with fatigue, and whose labours would inevitably return with the dawn of day, were compelled to seek refreshment from sleep; but the kind-hearted hostess watched by the side of her patient, and afforded him all the relief in her power.

Just as morning dawned, the affrighted dame awakened her husband with an exclamation that "the black was dying." Laurence and his son instantly arose, and witnessed the last agonies of the expiring Chinese.

"What now is to be done?" cried Laurence.—"Consult your betters, to be sure," answered the wife. "You are going up to the squire's: he's a justice of peace, you know, and will give orders what's best to be done. We have done our duty, to the best of our power, dear George, and God's will be done!"

"True, wife, true," replied George; "you speak right, and so it shall be. Squire Dickens is as rich as e'er a lord in the land; and mayhap he may do for the poor babe, or find out his own natural parents. Come, Jem, quick, trim the boat, and I'll be down with you in a whiff."

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUNDER OF A FAMILY.

MR. Sawyer Dickens, the gentleman to whose villa the Laurences now steered their little vessel, laden with fish for his table, was universally known as one of the wealthiest commoners in England.

There were not wanting, however, some persons with strong memories, who recollected that the origin of the wealthy banker was far from splendid. In truth, the first property acquired by the father of Mr. Dickens was obtained by the application of his talents and industry to the useful employments of cleaning boots and shoes, and knives and forks, at a public house in the neighbourhood of Newgate Market. Ned Dickens was indebted to Yorkshire for his birth, parentage and education, and was a firm and sincere professor of that celebrated creed, "*that pence get shillings, and shillings get pounds.*" This faith enabled him to endure with patience and humility many a cuff and kick, and cheered him under many a cloud of brickdust. Thus a few years' devotion to these pursuits enabled Ned Dickens to become a creditor of the nation, to the amount of fifty pounds Five per Cent. Stock, and promoted him to the rank of waiter. The same saving faith still *urged him* onward in the rich man's progress

and shielded him from all temptation to turn aside. "A penny saved 's a penny got," often rang in his ears, as he cast his little eyes upon the spruce garments of a brother waiter at a neighbouring coffee-house, and then surveyed his own old suit of greasy corduroy.

To all this personal merit, Fortune added her blind boon, by rendering the existing circumstances precisely such as best agreed with his peculiar genius and disposition.

His master died, and bequeathed all his right and title to the house, and the good-will of the trade, to his beloved widow, and his hopeful heir Tommy Jones.

Tommy was what at that period was termed a *natty spark* of eighteen, and the widow Jones was one of the numerous class of foolishly good-natured mothers. Ned was three years older than Tommy, and was at the death of his master, worth nearly two hundred pounds.

Vauxhall, Sadler's-Wells, and the Dog-and-Duck, became the exchequers into which Tommy Jones, assisted by certain fair friends, regularly paid the receipts of his mother's bar. These, however, were soon found inadequate to support the frolics of this spirited youth; and Ned Dickens's coffers became the budget from which his young master, with due humility, and at ample discount, drew his supplies.

The thrifty Dickens kept a good account. Thus the idleness and folly of the master enriched the servant; and by the time that Tommy was two-*and-twenty* he had broken his mother's heart, and

spent his last shilling. He then enlisted himself as an East-India soldier, and Mr. Edward Dickens succeeded him as landlord of that house, which, a few years before, he had entered a pennyless and almost naked boy.

With the attainment of such an eminence as this above the level of his ancestors, many a plodder would have been content. Not so Edward Dickens:—he was destined to be the founder of a family; and this little elevation served only to open to him the brighter paths that still towered above him. He did not halt. At five-and-twenty he considered that matrimoney would have been an expensive clog in his progress, and he consequently resisted with a Joseph's virtue all the bewitching lures of the widows and daughters which were daily surrounding him. To discover poor butchers, poor bakers, poor distillers, and poor excisemen, was Ned's constant study, from a persuasion that his own ready cash would produce more profit in proportion to the greater need of those with whom he bargained.

The scene of action now grew confined, in comparison with his stimulus to exertion. Fortune, again befriending him, soon opened a wider field to his talents. Adjoining to his own house was that of Mr. Barton, an eminent man in his trade, which was that of importing rum and brandy in puncheons and pieces, and retailing the same commodities with a little British addition, in quarters of gills, to the gardeners, butchers, fishmongers, and their fair assistants, who resorted to Newgate market. In this traffic Mr. *Barton* was rapidly acquiring wealth,

he was already a common-council man of the ward, and would, in all probability, have been lord mayor of London, but for the carelessness of his housekeeper, who one night forgetting to take off his cravat after his return from a turtle-feast, the poor man paid his life a forfeit for an inordinate indulgence of his appetite.

Next morning, no sooner was Edward Dickens informed why the shop was not opened, than he flew to the nephew of his neighbour, who was his heir at law; and who, being a thoughtless young man, then an ensign in the guards, very good-naturedly promised that, if he had the power, Mr. Dickens should have the lease and good-will of his uncle's house at a fair valuation.

This lucky hit, as some called it, but this quick foresight, as he himself justly thought it, proved a considerable advancement in the fortune of Mr. Dickens; for, as young Barton lived chiefly at an hotel in St. James's Street, he knew nothing of the value of his uncle's concern, and very confidently left the regulation of the whole transaction to a fashionable auctioneer, who in his turn being engaged to sell some pictures and porcelain at the west end of the town, sent a young disciple of seventeen to value the concern, against a deep old practitioner in the city, whom Dickens had engaged. It is an axiom in mercantile morality, to buy as cheap and sell as dear as possible. Therefore, though the stock and business of Mr. Barton was certainly worth three thousand pounds, it is not right to infer that

any thing like a bribe was the cause of their being assigned over to Mr. Dickens at one.

Such was the fact; and from that moment the thrifty Yorkshireman acquired hundreds with more facility than he had before gained pounds.

On his fortieth birth-day Edward Dickens arose worth forty thousand pounds. His residence was then a small house on Garlick Hill; where, with an establishment consisting of a house-keeper, one man-servant, and a clerk whom he had taken from a charity-school as an apprentice, he transacted more business, and gained more thousands, than many of his fraternity who kept their country house and carriages, and left the cares of their business to sixteen careless clerks, and an idle *fagging* partner.

It was at that epoch of his life that business introduced Mr. Dickens to the acquaintance of Hannah Sawyer, a well-looking woman, about his own age, the widow of the chief partner in a bank at Bristol. He soon discovered that her husband had died worth at least twice as much as he himself possessed, and he instantly persuaded himself that he had never seen so desirable a woman as this widow.

Expensive as it was, he insisted upon lodging the fair prize in his own house during her stay in London, and, for more reasons than he confessed, persisted in accompanying her and one of the surviving partners to Doctor's Commons, with poor Mr. Sawyer's will.

His visage lengthened as he heard the clauses read, which condemned fifty thousand pounds of

the widow's property to the strong boxes of the bank at Bristol, during the continuation of the present partnership (which could only be dissolved by unanimous consent), and for which she was only to receive a proportionate rate of the profit arising from the bank. Still, however, there remained thirty thousand pounds unappropriated, and the whole was at her own disposal, with only the above restriction.

In vain the gentleman who accompanied the widow from Bristol crossed in between the object of his own hopes and the brandy-merchant;—the latter was the favoured admirer.

Mrs. Sawyer had been advanced to the honours of a bride to the Bristol banker, from the capacity of a menial servant. In one of those deliriums, which sometimes sieze old bachelors who have scoffed all the days of their youth at matrimony, old Sawyer, at the age of threescore and ten, took Hannah, his house-maid, to wife. She had tenderly nursed the old man in his fits of the gout, for the space of twelve years, and was rewarded for her attention by a bequest of eighty thousand pounds. This fortune, and her own fair hand, Hannah, in less than a month, was prevailed upon to bestow on the "discreet," the "sober," the "jolly-looking" Dickens, in preference to the "conceited," "boyish," "pragmatical" Mr. Willis, the junior partner in the house of Sawyer and Co.

Thus invested with the privileges of a master, the bridegroom repaired to the bank at Bristol, and *was in all* due form introduced to the partners.

Though the education of Mr. Dickens had not extended beyond reading the catechism, he had taught himself to write the word "received," and he could sign his own name. For a slight knowledge of figures he was indebted to his love of money, which rendered it indispensable to know how to keep or to check his accounts. His interest in the banking concern now caused him to regret the want of a more liberal education, as it puzzled him exceedingly at first to comprehend the arcana of the innermost counting-house. So powerful, however, was his love of gain, that his naturally keen penetration, and quickness of apprehension, soon enabled him to form a just estimate of the value of the opportunity which Fortune had thus again bestowed on him.

The first use he made of his knowledge was to cajole the two junior partners of the house into an abandonment of their shares in his favour, for what appeared to them a splendid remuneration. The two others, he calculated, were old; and though they both had children, he strenuously objected to the admission of any of their progeny into the Bristol bank.

In the mean time his bride, who was a woman of plain good sense, without any thing remarkably vicious or virtuous in her composition, brought this man of wealth a son and heir, who was baptized, in honour of his mother's first husband, by the name of Sawyer.

In paying this compliment to his spouse, Dickens, however, had a latent motive;—for, as the firm of

the bank was still Sawyer and Co. he looked forward the fifth part of a century, when it might still be Sawyer Dickens and Co. with his son at the head of the house.

The same cunning made him appear to yield to his wife in consenting to retain the coach and black geldings which old Sawyer had sported before him. For though the provender of coachman and horses often cost him a sigh, yet he understood enough of banking to know that it would injure his credit to put down an equipage, and he was therefore compelled to go to church in his coach. Similar motives induced him to retain the same household establishment, and to cultivate the same expensive connexions which his predecessor had courted.

The experience of every day now brought fresh joy to Mr. Dickens. Seated in his counting-house, with all the consequence of wealth, this Bristol Plutus, who, a few years back, had followed, almost barefoot, the York waggon to London, now received the bows and the cringing applications of merchants, peers, and even statesmen, for the loan of small parts of that wealth which he had accumulated and acquired. With what rapture did his keen eyes regale themselves upon the bonds, deeds, mortgages, and other securities, which the folly, the extravagance, or the misfortunes of others poured into his coffers! Every sigh which the embarrassed man breathed in his hearing was a plaudit to his prudence, and the tears which repentant prodigality shed in his sight proved nutriment to the selfishness which had inspired him with the love of hoarding.

The climax of his prosperity however was yet to come. One of the oldest and wealthiest banking-houses in the metropolis was reduced to the most imminent danger of bankruptcy, by the imprudent speculations of one of the partners, who had employed immense sums in a foreign concern, which sums accident prevented from recurring to the bank at the expected period. The same cause which occasioned this disastrous disappointment operated upon the mercantile interest in general, and money was not to be obtained at any premium or on any security. The expedient of the government becoming pawnbrokers had not at that time been thought of: no influence, however powerful, at that period, would have availed the unprincipled or unfortunate speculator, by procuring from the country at large a loan of commercial exchequer bills to prop an individual's credit. The general dismay and distress of that period were, to men like Mr. Dickens, subjects of self-gratulation, and sources of still further gain. He among the few whose hoards enabled them to avail themselves of such an opportunity, and who had knowledge enough of money affairs to perceive it, aware that the gloom was temporary, purchased the national funds, then beyond all precedent depressed, at such prices as almost doubled his immense property. To crown the whole, the chief partner in the banking-house alluded to, as a last resource to save his tottering credit, applied to Mr. Dickens. Estates in Cumberland, of far greater value than the amount of all their wants, were pledged, as a security that the borrowers should replace, at a stated time, in the

funds, as much stock, at whatever price it might be purchased, as was now disposed of to supply their need, and for the use of which a premium was given so infamously usurious that it was never named. By this transaction the credit of the banking-house was saved, and, while many of lesser note were shattered to irremediable ruin by the pressure of the times, the house of Darlington and Co. stood firm, or rose, if possible, more proudly eminent than it was before the general shock.

Mr. Darlington was a man of worth and honour. he was descended from the younger branch of a noble family, and was in every respect worthy of his nobility. He had a son, a partner in the bank, whose sanguine temper had been the cause of their embarrassment, and he had a young and lovely daughter.

Time in his ceaseless flight soon stole away the months between the day of borrowing and the day of payment. The younger Darlington, whose indiscretion had so nearly proved fatal to the house, with a zeal honourable to his memory, determined to repair as much as possible the injury he had occoccasioned, by visiting, in person, the plantations he had purchased in the West Indies; and inspecting with his own eyes, the accounts of his agents, which his hopes prompted him to believe exaggerated, if not false. These shadowy hopes, however, vanished before the fatal truth. He found his affairs even worse than they had been represented; still greater losses threatened him—his ardent spirit could not *submit* to the blow of stern adversity—remorse was

followed by despair—he sickened, and died upon the plantation.

This calamity in a moment dissolved for ever all the fond hopes of the unfortunate father. The bonds to Mr. Dickens thus were forfeited; the mortgaged lands, the mansion of his forefathers, and in fact, the key to all the property which Darlington possessed was thus in the custody of Dickens, for on his mercy the credit of the bank now poised.

The Bristol banker was soon apprised of this state of Darlington's affairs. He felt no surprise: in fact, excepting the death of young Darlington, he had looked to just such a termination of the transaction; and that event, however melancholy to the father, was to him a source of further satisfaction. Without loss of time he repaired to London, taking with him his son, Sawyer Dickens. Knowing by experience the importance of a good education, Dickens had determined to bestow upon this his only child, as much learning as he had capacity to receive. For this purpose he had provided him, at home, with the best tutors in all the branches of education, fearing that at a school he might imbibe habits of expense, and idle notions of generosity,—a danger from which he well knew he was secure at home.

Thus, at the age of eighteen, Sawyer Dickens was as well stored with acquirements as most boys of the same age educated even at the best public schools. His disposition was marked by nothing remarkably vicious, nor did it display itself in any acts of generosity or kindness. If any trait of his mind was at that early *period* more conspicuous than another, it

was that sort of feeling which has frequently been denominated *purse pride*, and which perhaps cannot be more significantly expressed. From his father and his mother he received lessons upon the importance of wealth; and indeed, from all that he saw and heard around him under their roof, he could not fail to imbibe a conviction of the omnipotence of riches.

Such was the youth whom Mr. Dickens conveyed with him to town. Their chaise stopped at Mr. Darlington's house, in Cavendish-square, just as the unfortunate man was endeavouring to console his daughter for the death of her brother, and the probable consequences of his debt to Mr. Dickens. He heard the carriage draw up, and saw from the window his unwelcome visitors. "Good God!" exclaimed the agonized father, drawing his trembling girl to his bosom, "he is here; the wolf is already here, my child; he is come to devour your father!" Ere he had recovered from the shock, the servant announced Mr. Dickens. Politeness and delicacy were *caviare* to the Bristol banker; he followed the servant, and in a moment he and his son were in the room. Amelia clung round her father, and looked with terror on the intruders. Darlington held his hand to his forehead, and was dumb.—Dickens, without ceremony, walked up to him, and taking the other hand shook it in a friendly manner; while Sawyer, rivetted to the spot where he entered, was struck with awe at the sight of distress and beauty. Repulsing this freedom, Mr. Darlington with an effort concealing his tender feelings, said, with digni-

ty, "You are here, Mr. Dickens, rather unexpectedly."

"Mr. Darlington, I am not a man of words," replied Dickens; "I know your situation, and I am come here on purpose to save the credit of your house."

"Sir!" said Mr. Darlington, with an emphasis full of meaning, and an expressive glance of the eye.

"You doubt," said Dickens.

"Yes, sir," said Darlington, "both your will and your power. Could the credit of a banker be sustained in London while his family domains are in the hands of his creditors?"

"Certainly not," replied the other; "but these are not subjects for children," looking on Amelia.

"My daughter's distress, sir, is for a loss that can never be retrieved: my poor boy's zeal has cost him dear." He was compelled to cover his face with his handkerchief for a moment, then continued:—"Mr. Dickens, you are a father—judge if this visit at present can be acceptable."

"Mr. Darlington, I am a father, and I have my feelings as well as others, as my actions shall prove; but in this world, sir, we all know feelings must submit to circumstances."

"Sir!" said Mr. Darlington, with mingled sorrow and contempt.

"I would be plainer with you," replied Dickens; "but ——" and again he cast his eyes on Amelia.

"Retire, my love, a few minutes," said Mr. Darlington, handing his daughter to the door. "Go

into another room, Sawyer," said Mr. Dickens to his son; and the two fathers were alone.

"Mr. Darlington," said Dickens, smoothing his chin with his right hand, while he placed the other in his breeches-pocket—"Mr. Darlington, as I said before, I am not a man of words; I know precisely your situation, Mr. Darlington, and every twist and turn of your affairs, Mr. Darlington. I grieve for the loss of your son, who was certainly a very promising young man, but for this unlucky business.—But to the point, Mr. Darlington: you have still a daughter left, Mr. Darlington, and a very fine young creature to be sure she is. Now, Mr. Darlington, two hundred thousand pounds is not to be picked up in the streets; and if it be not forthcoming, why, you know, I may foreclose in a few days, and the thing would soon get wind; and then, I leave you to judge, Mr. Darlington, what would be the consequence: bad news flies apace, and a run on the bank would be the upshot, as you must be aware, Mr. Darlington. Now I have been calculating and reckoning these points, and what's the end on't? Why, this, to be sure: that if it was not necessary to raise this sum of two hundred thousand pounds directly, why, in time, things might come round next year's crop in the West Indies may not be so bad as the last, and the year after that may be better still: so that, if appearances could keep as they are,—why, people need be no wiser than they are, you know, Mr. Darlington; and they will bring their money to your counter the same as if it was as safe as ever, Mr. Darlington."

The various emotions which this harangue created in the breast of Mr. Darlington are indescribable. Frequently was he on the point of stopping it short; but, desirous of hearing the conclusion, he suffered him to proceed thus far, when the insinuation contained in the last sentence put him off his guard, and he exclaimed—"Oh, Harry! oh, my son! now—now I feel the wounds you have inflicted: I am compelled to listen to an insinuation against my honour and my honesty! Your wealth, sir, and my misfortunes have given you the power of ruining me, but not of insulting me with impunity."

"Insult you, Mr. Darlington! Why, your misfortunes have turned your brain. Insulted you!—I came a hundred and twenty miles to hush up matters, and put things straight,—and this is called insulting! This may be fine logic, for aught I know, Mr. Darlington; but I'm sure it's not according to *my* notions of business."

"What is it but insult, sir, to suppose that the house of Darlington would receive the money of its customers, when I know that its bankruptcy may take place at any hour you please? No, sir—no: if such is your intended clemency, I refuse it. Foreclose instantly, sir: take possession of Darlington-hall as soon as you please; advertise it for sale by auction, if you will. It may occasion me to shut up my doors in Lombard-street; but it shall not make me a villain!"

Mr. Dickens stared with astonishment at the warmth of Mr. Darlington; for, in truth, he never meant to convey that meaning by his speech, which

the quick sense of honour in Darlington attached to it.

"One word, one word, Mr. Darlington, and I have done," said Dickens. "You have run your head against a post, as the saying is; that's no fault of mine; I had no meaning to offend you. To come to the point, for I have always found plain dealing the best road, my meaning was this—You are under bond to pay me two hundred thousand pounds next month, or the estates in Cumberland are mine. Now, I know you can't pay me without shutting your doors in Lombard-street, as you say; and if it comes to be known that I have foreclosed the mortgage, because you can't redeem it, why, it comes to the same thing; for your credit is gone, and then where's your bank? Now, Mr. Darlington, don't be offended again, Mr. Darlington; though I am what I am, through hard working and close saving,—and though your family, as I have heard, be come of lords and earls,—yet, Mr. Darlington, my two hundred thousand 's as good as a duke's; and all I say is, Why, there it is, and more to that, if it is wanted; there's the use of the Bristol bank besides. And for what? you will say. Why, for a fair share of the profits; a fair honest share, Mr. Darlington; Edward Dickens is not the man to want more than his own."

Mr. Darlington was staggered. "If, sir," said he, "I have misconstrued your meaning, I beg your pardon. Now if I understand you rightly, you are willing to let the money advanced remain in the bank, upon being admitted to a proportionate

share of the profits; that is, you propose yourself as a partner."

"Not quite so: I am in years, Mr. Darlington; my son is coming on apace—eighteen years old last March the fourth. He is a sharp lad, has the best of *larning*, the very best, Mr. Darlington, that money could buy. You have a daughter ——"

"Sir! forgive the interruption," said Mr. Darlington, "you do not mean, perhaps, to wound me; but a proposal so abrupt, to place the son of another in the situation which the death of my own has so recently made vacant, is not of a nature to be attended to immediately. I thank you, however, for the confidence your proposal evinces. Nay, I will not absolutely refuse it; but I see so many obstacles to it, that, in requesting a little time for consideration, I would by no means have you withhold such proceedings as your judgment directs, from any notion of my consent which such a request might imply. You shall hear from me, sir, as soon as possible; but for the present you *must* excuse me."

These sentences were uttered with the interruption of sobs; and then ringing the bell for a servant, he left the room without waiting an instant for Mr. Dickens's reply.

"Oh, Harry Darlington!" inwardly ejaculated the distressed father, as he tottered to his library, "oh, human happiness!—I have nurtured a son from infancy to manhood—I have seen him qualified to occupy with honour the place of his father and grandfather:—he is vanished! In an instant the *hopes and affections* that sweetened my life are

dissipated like the dream of an hour! Thou art gone, my poor Harry, for ever!....And the son of an ale-house waiter!—Good God! is it he shall rise up in the place of a Darlington?"

The anguish of this worthy man was extreme, and the appearance of his daughter, who sought to alleviate his sorrow, only increased his distress.

In the mean time Dickens and his son had quitted the house; the former with no slight degree of astonishment at the conduct of Mr. Darlington.

"The thing, however, must take that course," said he to his son; "I am sure it must, Sawyer.—There 's no loop hole. Pride 's in the way: he thinks we are not grand enough in family connexions:—but we are in possession of that that will buy titles, boy.—He is a good meaning man that Darlington, but a little weak in the noddle: crying and pouting about what can't be helped; all idle nonsense. Well, let him alone a bit—must come to, Sawyer. We have him in a bag; of two evils he'll choose the least, I warrant. Won't relish bankruptcy. See if any of his grand cousins will raise two hundred thousand—not amongst them all together. Let him try the city—many a one willing to catch at such an opening; but where's their hundred thousands? Yes, yes, I foresaw all this; must come to us at last, and then, Sawyer, you are made for ever. The best accounts in all the city, receivership of the county, treasurership accounts, government accounts —I know what I am about, my boy; and I am sure Sawyer Dickens is not the undutiful son or the

snivelling fool that would baulk the plans of his father."

As this votary of wealth now prophesied, precisely so it came to pass. After a variety of struggles between pride and shame—between the instant disgrace and ruin of bankruptcy, and the more remote humiliation of adding Sawyer Dickens to the firm, the heart-broken Darlington acceded at length to the latter. Sawyer Dickens was immediately admitted, upon the most liberal and polite terms, as an inmate in the house of Mr. Darlington, and attended the banking-house in the capacity of a pupil, who was hereafter to become a principal in the concern.

It was the substance of one clause in the articles of this agreement, that if, on or before a certain day, Sawyer Dickens married Amelia Darlington, then and in that case the said sum of two hundred thousand pounds, now belonging to Edward Dickens, with all other share, interest, and concern whatever which he now possessed in the house of Darlington and Dickens, should be and become the joint property of the said Sawyer Dickens and Augustus Darlington, and the survivor of them, forever. The intent of this clause was obvious, and that intent was answered. The credit, the fortunes of Darlington now rested entirely on the connexion with Dickens; and the filial anxiety of Amelia soon discovered that important secret.

At the same time, Sawyer Dickens, with his father, perceived the numerous advantages that must accrue from a relationship with the family of Dar-

lington, in the event of his death, and urged with importunity his pretensions to the gentle Amelia.—They were married. Mr. Darlington lived to bless their nuptials, and then sunk with resignation to that grave, which the indiscretions of a beloved son had prematurely prepared.

The heart of old Dickens was now without a wish: he beheld the work of his hands, and rejoiced. From penury itself he had arisen to a level, in point of fortune, with the richest men of his age, and he saw his son firmly established in a concern that added every year immense accumulation to his already overgrown fortune. He lived to see that son the father of a son, and then his career of avarice was closed for ever.

Through life he had suffered no pain, he had enjoyed no pleasure, from the intellectual part of his being: for in him the accumulation of wealth was not a passion, but merely an instinct, which afforded him only a similar enjoyment to that, which the indulgence of gluttony yields to its grovelling votaries. In death he experienced neither mental terror nor hope; his corporeal sufferings engrossed his whole essence of being, except that in short intervals of ease he would exhort his son to preserve and to increase that wealth, which it had been the chief end of his existence to create. The widow Dickens survived her husband only a few months; and these three deaths left Mr. Sawyer Dickens, as before stated, one of the wealthiest commoners in England.

Education had given him advantages to which his father ever remained a stranger: and his introduc-

tion, at an early period of life, to the polite and intelligent circle of Mr. Darlington's acquaintance afforded him a view of the world never seen by his sire. The amiable qualities and the refined accomplishments of his Amelia were also charms, that wrought an almost magical effect upon the nature of a Dickens. Insensibly he became the well-informed man, the polished gentleman, and by degrees, the combined influence of his manners and his purse introduced Mr. Sawyer Dickens into the very highest circles of fortune, rank, and fashion.

He had attained his thirty-second year, and was in the zenith of his influence and notoriety, in the year seventeen hundred and eighty-five, the summer of which his family had passed at Brighton; and it was to this family that Laurence and his son were now sailing.

The appearance of the deceased was, however, in all respects that of a Chinese servant or navigator employed on board East India vessels; and Laurence himself had no doubt but that the vessel which foundered was the Indiaman which he had seen in the early part of the evening.

Turning from the ill-fated Chinese to the infant whom he had saved, the company now exhausted conjectures again upon whether he was English or French; of poor or wealthy origin; of noble or mean birth; the little innocent himself smiling all the while, as if in mockery of their idle guesses.

"Well, but what is to become of the dear little creature?" said Mrs. Dickens: "Be he of whatever country he may, rich or poor, mean or noble, I never saw a more lovely child.—How old do you think he is?"

Various ages were named, but the average of opinion seemed to fix his age at twelve months, or rather more.

Again the question was started, What was to be done with this little foundling of the sea? One of the party at length proposed a subscription for the purpose of advertising the existence of the child, of endeavouring to trace his parents or friends; or, if necessary, to support him during his incapacity to provide for himself.

"A most excellent idea," said a toad-eater of Mr. Dickens: "I second that motion with all my heart. Here's my guinea to begin; only I beg to propose that Mr. Sawyer Dickens be requested to be treasurer."

"You are infinitely obliging, sir," said the man of wealth, with a sneer, highly piqued at a compliment which, unfortunately for the speaker, had too much of trade in it to please Mr. Dickens, who was endeavouring at this epoch to sink the banker as much as possible in the member of parliament. Ostentation and pique therefore combined their instant operations on his heart, and he continued, with a purse-proud smile, to say, "I have already made up my mind as to what I conceive to be the duty of a man of my fortune on this occasion; and I really think, that, without the aid of your guinea, sir, I may venture to say that the little brat sha'n't starve." Then, turning to Mrs. Dickens, "What do you say, my love?—Would it ruin us to provide for the child?"

"That 's very good indeed," said the sycophant who proposed the treasurership, "when all the world knows that Mr. Sawyer Dickens might build an hospital in every county, and then be the richest man in England."

Whatever might have been the motive which inspired Mr. Dickens, his amiable wife instantly embraced the opportunity of exercising the benevolence which constantly warmed her bosom. With a suavity of manners peculiarly her own she expressed how delightful a gratification the proposal of Mr. Dickens afforded her; and added, that she would zealously assist in any means of discovering the father or any of the kindred of the infant stranger.

It was *now* proposed to return to the villa; and

the whole party were quitting the little garden of the Laurences, when Mrs. Dickens, lingering behind, slipped a present into the hands of dame Laurence. This example electrified the party:—purses were drawn out in an instant, as if by word of command, and several golden tokens of this adventure were left in the hands of the benevolent fisherman and his family.

The patronage of Mr. Sawyer Dickens conferred immediate notoriety upon the nameless little stranger. His story interested all the lovers of marvels and mysteries, and afforded to the curious crowd who visited the marine villa most fruitful materials for romantic conjectures: to mere conjecture, indeed, the origin and history of this infant continued to be confined.

The season at Brighton closed; the Dickenses returned to Cavendish-square; the novelty of the adventure gradually faded; and the story of the Chinese and child gave place to some new object of public curiosity.

Mr. Dickens, wholly engrossed by the pursuit of two objects, the increase of his wealth and the acquisition of a title, had almost forgotten the subject of his ostentatious bounty, when he one day accidentally caught the little orphan in the arms of Mrs. Dickens.

"Is that child here still!" exclaimed he.

"Poor little thing, where should it be?" said the tender-hearted Mrs. Dickens.

"Surely, madam, your own children have claims enough upon your time and affection! I certainly

did not mean to adopt the child as my heir, when I undertook to save him from the work-house."

"What must be done with the poor fellow then, Mr. Dickens? I have a hundred times thought to ask your instruction; but I have so little of your time that——"

"Send him to some old woman to nurse; let him be provided with necessaries, but no superfluities. How old do you suppose him to be?

"About two years old."

"Well, send him into the country for five or six years, and then we'll get him into some charity-school."

Away whirled Mr. Dickens. His excellent lady once more took the child on her lap. "Poor orphan!" exclaimed she, "How sweet are thy innocent smiles! how brilliantly joyful are thy laughing eyes! Ah! how is it now with thy parents? Are their eyes closed for ever; or are they now streaming with tears, wrung from hearts that throb with a painful anxiety for thee?—Poor babe!" continued she, kissing him again as he curled his little fingers round one of her own, "thou hast been almost miraculously rescued from the stormy billows of the ocean: may the same omnipotent hand still be exerted to preserve thee from all the dangerous storms and all the fatal shoals of this life's vice and error! The fate that directed thee to my arms I cannot but regard as a charge from Providence to supply the place of parents to thee; and to the utmost of my power I will discharge the trust."

This soliloquy was followed by a train of thought

relative to the person with whom she should intrust her little charge.

While endeavouring to recollect such a person, she was aroused from her reverie by the announcement of Mrs. Enfield.

Mrs. Enfield was the widow of a physician, who had just emerged from the obscurity to which talents without fortune are doomed in that profession, and who had just risen above the incumbrance of debts which an expensive education, and the necessity of maintaining a genteel appearance, had loaded him with, when, in the discharge of his duty as physician to a dispensary, he took a typhus fever, and died. In his lifetime Dr. Enfield had been eminently serviceable to Mrs. Dickens; and when, after his decease, it was found that all the property he left was scarcely sufficient to satisfy the demands of creditors, she interested herself in promoting a subscription for his widow and her infant little girl. By her influence and exertions, a sum was collected, which purchased an annuity of one hundred pounds, for their two lives; and to this good deed Mrs. Dickens added another. Among the other additions and improvements which Mr. Sawyer Dickens was making upon his Cumberland estate, he had then lately erected several new cottages, with a view to strengthen his interest in the county election. One of these cottages Mrs. Dickens had begged for her protégée, Mrs. Enfield, where, rent-free, she might reside, and obtain from her small annuity many more comforts than the same sum would procure in the vicinity of London. For this cottage Mrs. Enfield wa

the next day to set out, and she had now called to take leave of her kind-hearted patroness.

She was a woman of handsome form, about thirty, with a face marked by sensibility, but without beauty. She was dressed in plain deep mourning, and carried in her arms her little girl about twelve months old.

"I have intruded upon you, my dear madam, before I leave town, to offer you once more the assurance of that gratitude which I deeply feel for all your goodness, but which indeed I cannot express."

"My dear Mrs. Enfield, you are very good to look in upon me; but pray do not cause me to repent the little services I have been able to render you, by thus repeatedly making me ashamed of them. Do take a chair. You must know, I am in great trouble, Mrs. Enfield, about this little pet, who has actually fastened himself so strongly upon my affections, that he, in some degree, rivals my own children. You know Mr. Dickens's positive disposition—he has just been commanding me to send the poor fellow away—and indeed I believe he is right. It would certainly be an act of injustice and folly to bring up the child upon an equality with our own children, when their future prospects in life are so different:—they born to the first fortunes in the kingdom; and he, poor fellow, the heir to nothing, but what Nature bestows upon all her sons. Yet the difficulty is to procure him a proper asylum. I have never trusted my own children from under my daily inspection; and, do you know, I *can't help thinking* that the spirits of this poor

orphan's parents (supposing them to be no more) expect from me as much as if he were my own! But Mr. Dickens will be obeyed. If I knew any body —"

The grateful heart of Mrs. Enfield beat with pleasure, as a thought instantaneously struck her.

"If I could flatter myself," said she, "that you would think him properly confided to my care, dear madam, how happy would it render your poor widow to have some little chance of evincing her gratitude to you by her unremitting attention to your charge!"

"Are you serious in this kind suggestion, Mrs. Enfield?—You know not what a weight you would take from my mind, if I could bring myself to think the generous offer was not made at the expense of your own comfort and convenience!"

"Quite the reverse, I assure you. Sweet little fellow! he will lighten the sorrows of my heart; he will call my thoughts from the grave, dear madam, where, in spite of the voice of reason and religion, they too often wander; he will make me think daily of one whose example shall be my study, and whose goodness shall be my theme."

"Nay, now you are going from the point; but I shall keep you to it, believe me. How happy you have made me! how fortunate your call! You cannot conceive what a weight is removed from my mind." She then embraced the little urchin, and, placing him on his feet, continued—"Go, go, then, Edward: we have christened him Edward Montagu, *Mrs. Enfield.* Go, dear Edward, to your ——

Alas! what? Here is another perplexity. The first endearing syllable which almost every infant is taught to lisp is ma' or pa': poor little creature, what shall we teach him to call you?"

"Oh, let him call me mamma Enfield? and let him even believe me to be so, at least till he arrives at an age when it may be prudent to reveal to him all we know of his story. I shall, I assure you, make no distinction between my Eliza and your Edward, which may teach them that they are not both my children."

Mrs. Dickens expressed her thanks with heartfelt warmth. Joy, pure as the angels feel, filled her heart, and flew to her tongue. She did not, however, spend the morning in vain prattle. Solid arrangements of a pecuniary nature were formed; and Mrs. Dickens, after a thousand caresses, at length committed him to the protection of the worthy Mrs. Enfield.

"You will let me hear from you occasionally," said Mrs. Dickens, as the porter held the hall-door in his hand. "It is very probable in the course of next summer we may visit the Cumberland estate. But whenever I come, let me find you all happy, I charge you!"

CHAPTER IV.

A DISCLOSURE.

IT is scarcely to be doubted, that the disposition and temper of man receive a lasting stamp from the impression which is formed upon the infant mind by the first perceptions of exterior objects.

The scenery around the dwelling of Mrs. Enfield was not simply beautiful; it was grand, magnificent, sublime.

The cottage itself was small; but its internal decorations, and the charming arrangement of the little territory annexed to it, in a short time displayed the fine taste and elegant mind of its owner. It was situated in a valley, on the borders of an expansive lake, over which the eye gradually wandered to a vast amphitheatre of mountains, rising one above another, each lessening as the others rose. On an eminence to the right, at the distance of half a mile from the cottage, were seen the ancient towers of Beauchamp Abbey, fast falling to decay, and then inhabited only by a few servants of the once powerful family of Beauchamps. To the left, and nearly on a level with the mouldering pile called Beauchamp Abbey, the growing palace of Mr. Sawyer Dickens rose daily higher and higher, till

the grand portico, with white marble colonnades, showed itself above the green waving branches of his newly planted park; and by a contrast of all that is light, tasteful, elegant, and decorative, with the abbey's "hoary moulder'd walls," seemed to deride the fallen grandeur of that building which once had been

> ——— a pile complete,
> Big with the vanity of state.

Nearer to the cottage were sprinkled the newly erected tenements of Mr. Dickens, who had divided some hundred acres into small farms.

The back view from the cottage varied little in its scenery from that already described, except that through an opening in the mountains, the glittering spires of the town of —— were sometimes visible, at the distance of seven miles, which was the nearest market town.

Such was the birth-place of young Edward's first ideas. Here he lived almost in a state of solitude. His world consisted of the space his eyes surveyed; and all his knowledge of his own species was confined to Mrs. Enfield and her daughter, whom he loved with filial and fraternal affection, and to about a dozen other persons in the neighbourhood, for all of whom he felt kindness in return for the little benefits they bestowed upon him.

He grew a beautiful child; and the mild manners of Mrs. Enfield were reflected in his behaviour. *He was therefore* a favourite with all who happen-

ed to see him; and there was not a human being known to Edward from whom he had not received some little present of toys or fruits, which he never failed to offer to, or to share with, Eliza.

Outward objects had hitherto wholly engrossed his attention. Concerning all that he saw he would ask a thousand questions, and would frequently puzzle Mrs. Enfield extremely by the acuteness of his inquiries; but of himself—of the origin of his own existence—of the nature of his own individual feelings, he was not yet egotist enough once to think.

More than five years passed away without any visit from Mrs. Dickens or any of the family. The excellent lady frequently corresponded with the worthy Mrs. Enfield, and from her letters the latter learned the causes which, from summer to summer, deferred the intended journey to Cumberland.

Edward had now attained his eighth year, reckoned from the day of his preservation, and supposing him to have been on that day one year old. Mrs. Dickens had, on every anniversary of that day, continued to send some token of her remembrance to her charge, which was always accompanied by some present for Eliza. Edward had been told that these presents came from a good lady, who was his particular and best friend; but as the same good lady was, as far as he knew, as much the friend of Eliza, this circumstance never very deeply impressed him.

It was on the seventh return of this day that Mrs. *Enfield received* the customary packets, but was sur-

prised to observe a coronet impressed on the wax that sealed the accompanying letter. Upon unclosing the letter she learned that the great object of Mr. Sawyer Dickens's ambition was at length accomplished, and that he had been created earl of Roseville, baron Barton, and that the friend and benefactress of herself and Edward was now countess of Roseville.—The new title however did not disguise the old friend; the same benevolence, the same humility of mind distinguished every sentence of her letter. The concluding paragraph stated that the family intended visiting the lakes that autumn, and that in the course of their tour they should inspect the now almost finished palace, which was henceforth to be denominated Roseville park.

The imagination of Edward was now to be stimulated by new events. In less than a week after the receipt of her letter, lady Roseville, with a splendid equipage and retinue, alarmed the rustic inhabitants of the valley by a visit to the cottage of Mrs. Enfield. Accompanied by her son and daughter, she alighted from her carriage, and embraced with affectionate fervour the improved Edward; and cordially rejoiced to see the widow Enfield restored to tranquillity, and enjoying competence. Her own son, now styled lord Barton, was in his thirteenth year, and felt all the effects of that importance which he conceived his new dignity shed around him.

"Bless me!" exclaimed his young lordship—"bless me! can this fine fellow really be the poor bantling that blacky picked out of the sea seven *years ago? How* he has grown!"

"Hush, my love!" said lady Roseville, shocked beyond description at this abrupt attack.

"What does he mean, mamma," said Edward to Mrs. Enfield, "by my being picked out of the sea?"

"That's a good one!" exclaimed the young lord. "What, does he think this lady is his mamma?"

The whole of this dialogue passed much more rapidly than it can be related; while, in considerable perplexity, lady Roseville and Mrs. Enfield looked at each other without speaking, and not daring to notice the inquiring looks of poor Edward, who stood silent and abashed.

Her ladyship, with a quickness of decision, broke the silence:—

"No, my sweet little fellow, Mrs. Enfield is not indeed your mamma; but she is your very good friend, and you must love her as much as if she really were your mother."

Edward still remained silent; but he let drop the hand of Eliza, which he had held till then, and looked fearfully in the face of Mrs. Enfield, as if anxious yet dreading to hear her voice.

The tender-hearted widow was too much affected by the evidently painful sensibility of the child to utter a word.

"A'n't you indeed my mamma?" at length said he.

"No, no; not your real *right-earnest* mamma," said the good woman, in his own childish language, kissing him affectionately; "but I love you as much as if I were."

"*Is this lady*, then, my mamma?" said Edward

with simplicity, looking at lady Roseville; "and is she come to take me away from you and Eliza?"

The young lord laughed heartily, and exclaimed, "That 's excellent!"

Lady Roseville frowned at the levity of this forward boy, who had been brazened for two years at Eton; and turning to the trembling Edward, whose little heart throbbed with emotions so new, so painfully surprising that they brought tears into his eyes, she took his hand and drew him close to her bosom.

"I should be proud to have so good a little boy for my son as you are, Edward; but I am not your mamma. No, my dear child, we are afraid your poor mamma died at sea when you were very, very young——"

With wonderful quickness of perception the child interrupted her—

"Ah! now, then, I know what that young gentleman means by saying I was picked out of the sea by blacky: my poor mamma was drowned. Oh, why did not blacky pick up my mamma instead of me?"

"Sweet child!" exclaimed the countess, embracing him.

After a short pause, during which the mind of Edward seemed labouring with inquiry much beyond his years, he said, suddenly—

"Where is blacky? Where is he?"

"He is dead and buried," said lady Roseville: "but listen to me, Edward," continued she, observing *that the uncertainty* of his origin which had thus

unfortunately been made the first exercise of his reasoning powers, pained him extremely; and justly concluding that a simple statement of his story, in language adapted to his tender years, was the best remedy, and could not be too quickly administered, —"Listen to me, Edward," said she, "and I will tell you how it has happened that you live with this good lady, who has been another mamma to you. When you were a very very little child, not much more than twelve months old, you and your parents, as we suppose, were on board a ship which was lost at sea in a storm. Of all the people in the ship only one was able to swim to the shore, and that was a Chinese, a blackamoor, as my son has called him: this humane man brought you from the ship to land, or you would have been drowned too; he however conveyed you, half dead, to the hut of a kind-hearted fisherman, who received and restored you. The poor Chinese could not speak English, and therefore could not make himself understood by the fisherman's family, and before the next morning he died; you were thus left a helpless little stranger. It happened that at that time our family resided at the very place where the Chinese brought you, and lord Roseville was so good as to take upon himself the care of you, and to place you with this good lady: who has, I am sure, been a very good mamma to you."

The child seemed bewildered by attempting to follow a train of thoughts occasioned by the information which had been thus abruptly forced upon

his tender mind. He remained silent when lady Roseville paused, fixing his starting eyes upon a portrait of Dr. Enfield which hung over the chimney. At length he said sorrowfully to Eliza—

"Ah, Eliza, that was your dear papa; but he was not mine! May be I shall never know who was!"

A flood of tears followed this affecting speech.

"What extraordinary sensibility, for so young a mind!" said lady Roseville.

"He is indeed a prodigy," said Mrs. Enfield: "I have frequently been astonished by proofs of his feeling, and his understanding, far above his years. I have ever dreaded this moment; but when the first effects of such a discovery shall have subsided, I think we shall have reason to congratulate ourselves and him, that all future disappointments have been thus prevented. Come, my dear Edward, look up: this is your good friend; this is lady Roseville who has been indeed a benevolent mamma to you, as well as a husband to me!"

"Let us change the subject," said lady Roseville. "Have you, in your rambles, ever reached so far as the Park, Edward? have you seen the workmen there? There are some fine paintings now executing on some of the ceilings and walls. Will you ride with us there? Lord Roseville will be glad to see you."

"Not now, if you please, ma'am," said Edward sorrowfully; "my head aches very much."

Lady Roseville, whose goodness of heart was almost equalled by the excellence of her judgment, per-

ceived the distress into which the unintentional discovery at that time had thrown the cottagers; for Mrs. Enfield and Eliza deeply participated in the sorrows of Edward, took a hasty leave, and promised to see them next morning.

"Don't cry, my little fellow," said lord Barton, who had been most awkwardly twirling a watch-chain round during the conversation: "my father will, I'm sure, provide for you; you won't want for any thing; don't cry, my man."

His sister, who was possessed of exquisite sensibility, had silently sympathized with the poor orphan in his sorrows, and, with sweet affability, taking his hand, put it to her lips, and simply said "God bless you Edward!" while a tear fell warm from her beautiful cheek upon the very place where her lips had impressed the kiss.

The mind of Edward received a shock from this abrupt discovery of his mysterious origin, which not all the soothing tenderness of Mrs. Enfield was able wholly to repair. He seemed, as it were, instantaneously altered from the gay and sprightly child to the reserved and melancholy boy. He sat dumb as a statue for some time after lady Roseville's departure; then, starting as from a reverie, asked question after question respecting the story of his preservation, and his present situation. In vain Mrs. Enfield attempted to divert his attention to other objects, and even the kind assiduities of Eliza rather increased than assuaged his sorrow. He never ceased inquiring till he had learned all *that was known* concerning himself.

The night came, and Edward retired to his bed, for the first time, with a mind oppressed. His sleep for the first time was disturbed by dreams, in which he saw the shipwreck which had so powerfully impressed his imagination; he saw his lifeless parents floating on the turbulent billows; he saw his generous preserver, as his quick fancy had formed him; he felt himself borne through the rough dashing waves; he beheld the benevolent Laurences; and at length he fancied himself introduced to his great benefactor, in whose presence he felt an awe so painful that he awoke disturbed and terrified.

While they were at breakfast the following morning a footman delivered a note to Mrs. Enfield, from lady Roseville, requesting her company, with Eliza and Edward, at the Park.

As they approached the superb mansion of his benefactors, the imagination of Edward pictured to him the austere form of lord Roseville, which he had beheld in his dream, and he trembled and turned pale. His awe was far from lessened by the splendour of the palace he now for the first time entered, which, even in its unfinished state, was sufficient to have dazzled even a mature imagination.

Encouraged by the smiles of Mrs. Enfield, however, the little dependent ascended the white marble staircase that led to a suite of rooms in one wing of the building, which was fitted up for the temporary reception of the family.

As the doors of a small saloon were unfolded, the *countess and her* lovely daughter were discover-

ed sitting at breakfast. The eyes of Edward travelled swiftly round the apartment. The earl was not there. His heart felt relieved from a weight of apprehension, and it even beat with joy when lady Roseville advanced to meet them, and apologized for the abrupt departure of the earl, who, with his son, had set off to travel the first stage towards London on horseback. This intelligence delighted Edward, who now gratified, without restraint, the inquisitive turn of his mind by a minute observation of the new wonders of art around him. The exquisite paintings, the magnificent furniture and decorations of the room, afforded him a mental recreation which for the moment absorbed all recollections of himself

The rules of proportion, and the orders of art, may be acquired by lessons; but that discernment, or at least that relish of the beautiful or the sublime, which is vaguely denominated taste, is a gift of nature. The seeds of taste were, even at this early period of his life, implanted in the mind of Edward, who devoured with ecstasy all the beauties, and elegancies, and splendours which the power of wealth had profusely scattered about the palace of lord Roseville.

When to this gratification were added the sweetly soothing tenderness of lady Roseville, and the artless and affectionate efforts to amuse of her daughter lady Emily; when the former struck the wires of her harp; when the latter opened to him her portfolio of drawings, the productions of her *own pencil*; when she explained to him the names

and properties of plants and flowers, or described to him the internal view of a theatre, Edward's heart glowed within him.

Eliza Enfield, who shared in all the attentions shown to Edward, though older than him by some years, was comparatively insensible to these pleasures. The objects she saw were new, and they certainly afforded her pleasure; but it was not, as in Edward, a rapturous, an absorbing pleasure; her mind was amused, but her heart was uninterested; while in him the whole scenery engendered new feelings, new wishes, new hopes, and new fears.

At length the day closed. How early did Edward experience the fickleness of human nature! The very place which he had approached with a reluctance amounting almost to terror, he now quitted with regret so keen, that he sighed as he reflected on the narrow space and humble ornaments of Mrs. Enfield's cottage; and sighed again as he contrasted the accomplishments and elegant deportment of lady Roseville and her daughter, with those of Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, whom, till to-day, he had considered as the most perfect of beings. It was therefore with inexpressible joy that he heard lady Roseville say, at their departure, that she should not quit the Park these three days, and that she hoped to see them daily during her stay.

These three days were passed at Roseville Park in a manner no less delightful to Edward than the first, and on the fourth the countess and her daughter quitted Cumberland for the metropolis.

The young mind of her protégé had received,

however, from the scenes and society of even these few days, a tone of elegance which increased with his increasing years.

Nor was the impression which lady Emily's accomplishments and captivating manners made upon his memory and affections less forcible. Her unaffected smiles, the speaking loveliness of her bright blue eyes, her finely moulded form, were ever present with him. Eliza ceased to interest him as she had done before he knew the lovely Emily. Eliza was a good-tempered and a pretty girl, and was far from deficient in intellectual acquirements: but she wanted that glowing animation of beauty, and that sparkling fire of mind, which Emily possessed. Eliza could perform a sonata upon the piano with considerable expression and effect; but this was a picture of still life, in comparison with the enchantment of the senses produced by lady Emily, as she exhibited her graceful form and limbs in dancing to the sounds which she herself extracted from the tambourine.

"O! how I should like to see lady Emily dancing again upon the lawn!" would Edward frequently exclaim. At other times he would say, "O! Eliza, I wish you played the tambourine like lady Emily;" or, "I wish you could draw like lady Emily."

A large portion of his boyish thoughts was occupied by lady Emily; and the whole of his contemplations were divided between admiration of her, and fruitless surmises upon his own origin.

While the strength of these impressions remained, his walks were always directed to Roseville Park. Here he grew acquainted with the various artisans and artists, which were employed in completing and decorating that modern palace. He would almost tire them with questions respecting lord Roseville and his family; while all the information which he gleaned tended to inspire him with increased awe of his patron, with increased veneration and affection for his lady and his daughter.

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGER.

ONE evening, when Edward was rather mo than ten years old, as he was returning alone fro one of these visits, he observed, at the verge of tl park, an elderly gentlemen, plainly dressed, wl was leaning on his cane, and contemplating the el gant structure which Edward had just quitted.

"Tell me, young gentleman," said the strange "whom does this fine mansion belong to?"

"The earl of Roseville, sir."

"Roseville—Roseville? That must be a new cre tion—I do not recollect the title—But pray,—y live hereabouts, I presume,—can you tell me whe Darlington Hall is? I have been absent from the parts some years, and may have mistaken; but sur ly this should be the spot."

"Darlington Hall stood, sir, on the very site that new palace."

"Stood! young gentleman, do I comprehend yo Do you mean that the old hospitable mansion Darlington has been demolished to make room f this ephemeral temple of luxury? Spirits of our d parted ancestors, how must ye scowl upon the anti of your children!"

Edward, who did not consider the concluding apostrophe to have been addressed to him, was proceeding homeward, when the stranger called to him—

"Sir, I beg your pardon, but you would much oblige me if you would direct me where I may obtain some refreshment. I once knew this part of the world perfectly well; but really every thing here has undergone such a wonderful metamorphosis, that I can scarcely credit my own senses."

"I am going home, sir; it is but about a quarter of a mile further; you can see a little white cottage at the edge of the lake, sir; I live there; and I am sure Mrs. Enfield will be very much pleased with me for conducting you to whatever entertainment our house affords."

"You are a kind-hearted youth. I thank you, and will accept your offer."

"Or, if you had rather, sir," said Edward, "I am acquainted at the Park; and the house-keeper will, I am sure, receive you with politeness, though perhaps not with so much kindness as Mrs. Enfield."

"No, no, no. When the choice to a poor weary traveller is a palace or a cottage, he must be a novice indeed who prefers the former. Come, my kind friend," continued the stranger, patting Edward on the head, "to the cottage, to the cottage."

At the door of the cottage they were received by Mrs. Enfield.

"I have been induced, madam," said the stranger, "to take this liberty, by the ingenuous assurances of this young gentleman, who tells me that you never turn the weary traveller from your door."

"No, never, do you, dear ma'am?" said Edward: "and this gentleman seems very tired."

"To confess the truth," said he, "my young friend, I am not only much fatigued, but greatly disappointed. I have travelled from Scarborough in stage coaches, the last of which I quitted at the turnpike-gate, where the road turns off to Darlington; and I had walked ten miles in the hope of meeting a kind reception at the hall, when, to my astonishment, I found that the noble pile was levelled to the dust!"

Mrs. Enfield was never seen to more advantage than when employed in acts of hospitality. Scarcely had the gentleman entered the neat little parlour, when the table was spread with home-made wines, fruit, bread, butter, and cheese. Edward took his hat and stick, Eliza placed a chair for him, and Mrs. Enfield with unaffected smiles invited him to the repast.

"This scene, madam," said the stranger, seating himself, "almost makes me doubt an opinion I have adopted, that disinterested benevolence is a stranger on earth."

"The circumstances must have been of a peculiarly melancholy nature, I presume sir, that could give birth to that opinion. I trust there are numerous instances of disinterested benevolence to be met with daily."

"Ah! madam," said the stranger, "you live here in the bosom of retirement, accustomed only to the simplicity of nature, and I marvel not at your sentiments."

"But that I do live here, sir, is one proof at least of the existence of disinterested goodness." Then with overflowing gratitude of heart she broke forth into a brief narrative of lady Roseville's generous conduct, and concluded with the warmest eulogium of her patroness.

"She has acted like a Darlington; she is worthy of her sire."

"You knew the Darlingtons, then?"

"Yes, I knew them well. But who is this earl of Roseville, to whom you tell me she is married?"

"He was a Mr. Sawyer Dickens, a man of immense wealth."

"Which wealth has purchased him a title!—is it not so?"

Mrs. Enfield smiled.

"Wealth, madam, has become in these days of corruption a substitute for every virtue; and though I did not know that he was now a peer, I am not altogether unacquainted with the circumstances which brought about the union of the waiter's son with a daughter of the house of Darlington."

As the stranger finished these words, he passed his hand over his eyebrows to conceal his tears. He continued—

"Forgive me, madam: the name of Darlington recalls to memory such scenes, and revives such

painful feelings in this heart, that I cannot conceal my griefs."

He arose, and walked towards the window, which commanded a view of Beauchamp abbey. He started—"There again, there again," said the stranger, turning round to Mrs. Enfield, "the sight of those old towers—Oh, how painful, how heart-rending!"

Mrs. Enfield attempted to say something of a soothing nature; but the stranger, without listening to her, muttered some words wholly unintelligible: then, recollecting himself, he said—

"Kind, good lady, be not alarmed; do not suppose, from this behaviour, that a maniac trespasses upon your hospitality; no, nor a drivelling idiot, who means to spend his days in unavailing sorrow: no, madam, these tears have started, I assure you bold mutineers against my will as much as against my reason, and I trust they are the last that will disgrace my cheek."

He paused a few moments, and then more calmly resumed—

"Ah, madam! many, many years have rolled over me since, in the happy days of infancy and childhood, I dwelt among the scenery of this romantic spot. Yon abbey and its venerable towers, this tranquil lake, these awful mountains, were the first objects which impressed my opening mind. The sight of them brings back the unalloyed delight, the pure and heartfelt joys that then were mine; and, oh, God! the contrast of what I since have suffered, what I still endure——"

The energy with which the stranger spoke, and the abruptness with which he left unfinished his sentence, added to a wild yet melancholy countenance, almost induced Mrs. Enfield to believe that he was indeed that maniac, which he had himself feared she would suppose him to be.

Edward, who had at first felt pleasure in listening to him, now instinctively moved further from him, and nearer to Mrs. Enfield. The stranger observed it.

"Nay, my good fellow, you surely are not afraid of me! Come, give me your hand; that 's a brave fellow. Pray, madam, how old is your son?;'

"Edward is almost nine years old, sir; but he is not my son."

"Your nephew then, perhaps?"

"No, sir, he is no relation."

"Indeed! Some relation then, I presume? What is your name, sir?" taking him by the hand.

"Edward, sir."

"Edward: well, but what else?"

Edward blushed; he withdrew his hand, burst into tears, and left the room, followed by Eliza.

"What have I done!" exclaimed the stranger. "Forgive me, madam, if ignorantly I have touched some chord that has produced this pain."

"You have innocently hurt his feelings, sir. He is in fact a foundling; and he knows it."

"A foundling! Poor fellow!" said the stranger. "How shall I make him amends? But he should have been named after the person who found him,

or the place where he was found, and have been kept ignorant of so distressing a want."

"Such certainly was lady Roseville's design; but——"

"Lady Roseville!" interrupted the stranger.—"Amelia Darlington you mean. What of her, madam? What *had* she, or what *has* she, to do with this poor boy?"

The impatient and impetuous manner of the stranger again alarmed Mrs. Enfield, and she hesitated in her reply.

"Tell me, madam, and I beseech you tell me truth too,—What share has Amelia Darlington in the destiny of this foundling, as you call him?"

"Sir, she is his best friend his benefactress."

"Indeed!" said he, starting with surprise—"So, so, so!—well, well!—What should surprise a man of my experience? Yet,—no,—it cannot be; I wrong her; it is impossible! She was all purity—and yet, so was—Who knows the heart of a woman! You tell me that she is your best friend, and his best friend. This foundling may have a natural claim to the care of Amelia, eh, Mrs. Enfield?"

Mrs. Enfield could not immediately comprehend the inuendo contained in this speech; but as the stranger continued to fix his eyes upon her with a mysterious meaning, the conviction of his disrespectful suspicion flashed upon her mind, and roused an indignation which she made no effort to conceal. She rose from her chair, rung the bell, and saying haughtily, "My servant, sir, will attend you," was *leaving the* room, when the stranger quickly follow-

ed her, and, snatching her gown, exclaimed in a tone of distress—

"Madam, madam, if you have a heart, forgive me; allow something, I beseech you, to a man whom misery and despair have almost crazed."

"The insult to myself I could easily forgive; but when your gross allusion involves the honour of a lady whose purity is unsullied as an angel's, it becomes me to say, that our acquaintance is not of a nature, sir, to warrant any further communication."

"I cannot suffer you, my good lady, to depart under the influence of so much displeasure. Pronounce my pardon then, and believe me, that your own grateful heart can never never feel that ardour of admiration, that chaste respect for Amelia Darlington which this bosom cherishes. I shall detest myself for suffering a thought so derogatory to her angelic virtue, even for a moment."

Softened in her displeasure by this display of unfeigned sorrow, and stimulated by her love of lady Roseville, still further to confirm the stranger in the persuasion of her innocence and goodness, Mrs. Enfield closed the door she held in her hand, and proceeded:

"The concern which you appear to take, sir, in the character of one of the best of women, makes me anxious to convince you how grossly your suspicion has injured it. The history of poor Edward is singular; I will briefly relate it to you, and you will then perceive that the interest which lady Roseville has taken in his unfortunate destiny is in every respect most honourable and praise-worthy."

"Oh, it must be so! I am a hasty fool. Pray, madam, proceed."

Mrs. Enfield then began to narrate the history of the storm and shipwreck; and had proceeded to that part of the tale where the Chinese entered the hut of Laurence with the infant, when she perceived the countenance of the stranger convulsed with emotion. —She paused.

"Go on," exclaimed he.—"Say, was this child the boy I saw just now?"

"Edward was that child. Why do you tremble so, sir?"

"A Chinese, you say;—the Sussex coast;—the date of the year;—the month August;—the boy then about twelve months old;—Curse on the chance that brought him hither!"

He paused; he clasped his hands together, and raised his eyes as if in silent ejaculation.

Mrs. Enfield was overcome with astonishment. She felt inspired with the conviction that she saw before her the father of Edward, thus miraculously brought under the same roof with his child. Ere she could speak, the stranger again exclaimed,

"Yes! It shall be so—It shall be so.—Farewell, farewell!"

"Oh stay, sir, I beseech you, stay!"

"Not here a moment, madam, nor in the same county another day."

"Will you not explain yourself? Consider, sir, the anguish of such conjectures as those you have created."

"Do you, good woman, talk of anguish? What is

your suspense, what is your anguish, to the tortures of a heart lacerated as is mine, and bleeding at every pore? Nay, hold me not; my purposes are never shaken, madam. My heart is broken, but my will is stubborn still."

"Will you not see him?

"No—not to redeem him from perdition would I see the——. Away! away!"

As he was rushing wildly out of the cottage, leaving his sentence unfinished, Edward crossed him in the path, and, hanging down his head, sought to avoid him.

A new resolution seized the seeming madman: he caught hold of Edward with his left hand, and, keeping him at arm's length, riveted his eyes upon the countenance of the terrified boy. Mrs. Enfield had followed closely, and stood trembling near him. The stranger continued gazing silently for above a minute; then with his right hand he stroked back the curling ringlets which shaded Edward's forehead, and in a pathetic tone said,

"Yes, yes, the lineaments are hers; her eyes, her nose, and mouth, the very curve of her lip,—plain enough hers. Yes; there 's all the mother stamped upon thy face; but thy father—boy,—Ha! ha! ha! Go, go, unfortunate!—Why did they save thee from the waves?"

Spurning from him the poor child as he spoke, he ran from him to a considerable distance. Suddenly he stopped, turned round, and beckoned to Edward, who, from a mixed impulse of terror and

surprise, stood still. The stranger returned; and, with a smile like madness, exclaimed,

"I am wrong:—how could he help it, you know, madam, that his mother played the jilt? It's no crime of his, that she who bore him broke my heart."

"My mother! my mother!" exclaimed Edward: "Oh, sir, do you know my mother? Oh, pray, pray tell me who she is; where she is;—let me fly to her. Oh, good, dear sir, think what a dreadful thing it is to know nothing of one's parents!"

In the earnestness of supplication he knelt down and clasped the skirt of the stranger's coat, who turned away his head, and covered his face and his tears with his hands, while his only answer to Edward was an agonized groan. Mrs. Enfield now added her entreaties that the stranger would explain the mystery of his conduct and expressions.

"Hither I came," said the stranger, "hither I came to seek seclusion's balm for a wounded heart. Here, buried from the notice of mankind, I hoped to find a secret resting-place, till death entirely relieves me from all the misery of retrospection. Oh! who could have conjectured, that on the very spot which I had chosen as the grave of recollection, I should encounter this living image of herself, to renew all the heart-rending ideas of what she was when pure as this resemblance of her beauties, while that resemblance itself is the very seal and evidence of her prostitution, and my shame! Yes, this boy, wonderful as it appears, is the son of my wife!"

"Oh, then *you* are my father," cried Edward, "and Providence has brought about this meeting!"

"I—I, your father!" said the stranger, breaking from the arms of Edward, which entwined his knees. "No,—poor wretch! Thou art the fruit of crime, the offspring of adultery! Thou hast no parents; for thy guilty mother and her paramour, thy father, perished in that hour when thou wast rescued from destruction."

Edward, relinquishing his hold, fell prostrate on the earth.

Mrs. Enfield ran to his assistance; and the mysterious stranger, with a wild shriek of despair, smiting his forehead, exclaimed,

"Where, where shall I fly to escape from misery!" and in a moment he was out of sight.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OLD DOMESTIC.

MONTHS after months rolled on, adding hour to hour of cruel disappointment and keen regret to the heart of Edward, who could not relinquish the hope of seeing again the husband of his mother. The stranger, however, came not, and the heart of Edward sickened. In vain were all the attempts of Mrs. Enfield to remove from his susceptible mind the impression of melancholy occasioned by the words and manner of the mysterious Unknown. Nature had implanted in Edward a quickness of feeling, a sensibility which the peculiarities of his situation increased. The solitude in which he grew fostered the contemplative spirit with which he was endued. He had no playmates but Eliza; the children of their few neighbours being constantly employed in labour, to which Edward was wholly a stranger. Books became his companions. The library of Dr. Enfield, with the exception of medical books, had been preserved by his widow, and afforded to Edward the only amusement in which he indulged.

Thus were passed the first thirteen years of his life. The incident of the mysterious stranger had *been made* known by Mrs. Enfield to lady Rose-

ville: but she had only slightly glanced at the information in her answer; and for above two years she had ceased writing altogether, being on a tour of the continent with lord Roseville, her son and daughter.

Edward, as he approached his fourteenth year, began to meditate more seriously on his dependent situation, and would sometimes converse on the subject of his future destiny till he brought tears into the eyes of Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, till he wept himself. Still more frequently would he ramble for hours alone, and indulge his romantic imagination in conjectures concerning the story of his lost parents, or in building airy structures of his own futurity.

He was one day thus contemplatively strolling, when he found himself unawares at the brink of a precipice, which overhung a natural cascade, whose waters tumbling perpendicularly down the craggy sides of a steep cliff, formed at its base a little river, which divided the grounds of Roseville Park from those of Beauchamp Abbey.

Pleased with the spot, Edward threw himself listlessly on the grass, and, reclining his head upon his elbow, listened with a species of soothing, yet sad, delight to the monotonous dashings of the water-fall; while his eye surveyed the scene around him.

On each side of the eminence he saw a park and mansion; but in nothing were they similar to each other. On his right the ivy-mantled towers of Beauchamp Abbey bounded the view of a thickly

wooded domain, where huge oaks, the growth of centuries, waved over long dark terraces of grass, which the mower's sickle had not visited for years: grottoes of shell-work, surmounted with ill-formed images of stone, now green with moss; hermitages with straw-thatched roofs; fountains which leaden cupids guarded; and caves dug deep in gloom, formed altogether a display of the taste of other times, and made up a scene, which, while it impressed the thought "that grandeur once dwelt here," at the same time told to the beholder the tale of its desertion. Nothing living was seen upon the surface of the earth, nor was the stillness of desolation interrupted, save by the discordant screams of the rooks who tenanted the lofty pines.

When the eye turned to the left, a scene so different presented itself, that no contrast could be stronger. Trees of all species, and of various growth, planted with exact attention to produce effect, seemed as they were sprinkled in elegant clusters upon the close-cropt grass, which every where shewed the hand of cultivating care. Pleasure-grounds, where flowers, shrubs, canals, statues, casinos, and pavilions, were mingled by the hand of taste so skilfully, that the scene of blended art and nature seemed like the workmanship of fairies. Amidst it rose the mansion of lord Roseville, combining, in a most masterly style of modern composition, all the magnificence of an eastern palace with all the elegance of an Italian villa. But life gave an action and an interest to this scene, which formed *the most striking* reverse of its neighbour.

In some parcels of the Park were seen scores of sturdy peasants, bending to gather from the golden spots the waving corn. In other parts flocks of sheep and herds of cattle grazed; and on a vast sheet of water proudly floated a superbly decorated yacht, while on the margin several men were throwing nets for fish.

Edward had remained a considerable time contemplating these scenes in silent solitude, when his attention was aroused by the sound of a human voice. He started; and at a considerable distance beneath him he perceived Adam Osborn, the old steward of sir Everard Beauchamp, who was slowly hobbling up the steep ascent, accompanied by a little shock-dog, to whom he occasionally addressed his discourse, not imagining that any other ear listened to his lamentations.

Adam was now in the eightieth year of his age, almost the whole of which term he had spent in the service of the Beauchamps. He had been admitted when an orphan of twelve years old among the domestics of the Abbey, and had remained more than three-score years an inmate of its ancient walls,—witness of many changing scenes. Children had been born there since Adam first entered it, who had lived to old age, and had died, leaving him the surviving spectator of their whole drama of seven ages. He had quaffed many a joyous draught at the births of the sons and daughters of that honourable house; he had danced at the weddings of many; he had followed still more to the tomb. He had seen *the sun of* prosperity pouring its splendid

rays around the noble mansion of his masters, then thronged with summer friends;—and he had lived to see that throng dispersed by the chill blasts of stern adversity, which long blew round the solitary domain, where he alone was left to contemplate, with aching breast, the daily ruin of the Beauchamp interest and influence, strikingly contrasted with the daily increase of the power and splendour of the earl of Roseville.

To Edward this venerable man had been pointed out by the cottagers, as he passed through the village, under the nick-name of Cross-Old Adam; but to Adam, Edward was wholly unknown.

The first intelligible sentence that struck the ears of Edward, was—

"An earl!—Good Lord! an earl!—the waiter's son to come to be an earl! Well, thank God, they can't unmake the father what he was—No, no—they cannot tell me that this new-fangled banker lord is not a waiter's son. Ah, well-a-day! lack-a-day! But he has a power of gold! Ah! there it is. Well, never mind 'em, Shock, never mind 'em. They may tell us we are poor, but they cannot say that our noble baronet's father cleaned shoes, and ran on errands barefoot. No, no, no! Let 'em look back from our good king's reign, to William the Conqueror's time, and see what brave and noble knights the race of Beauchamps are!"

Edward registered every word of old Adam in his memory. He was delighted with such a proof of his affectionate attachment to the fortunes of his

masters, which made even his prejudices appear amiable.

From the position which Edward had taken, he could, unperceived by the old steward, command a perfect view of him. He had seated himself on a little hillock of earth, and the dog was looking up in his face.

"What kickshaw! What gingerbread-work the waiter's son is making!" exclaimed Adam again. "Farming too! Fishmonger as well, I warrant. Selling and buying, digging and delving, as if there was no difference between tradesfolks and farmers, and gentry and nobility! Ah, lack-a-day! Shock, what will poor old England come to at last, with all this trafficking confusion! Well, they can't say that we do these mean things! No, no.—The oldest man alive never saw a plough in Beauchamp Abbey Park! No, no.—The noble owners of that proud building never took in calves to grass. They knew the dignity proper for the station to which it pleased God to call them; they left farming to farmers, and grazing to graziers, and fishing to fishers, and so let all ranks live. They spent their noble fortunes like princes as they were, and spread happiness all around them. Oh, Shock, the days that I have seen! Ah! in those noble green alleys (pointing his walking-stick towards Beauchamp Abbey Park), and up and down those terraces and slopes, many a time I've seen dukes, duchesses, and lords, and bishops, aye archbishops also, (for we had one in our own family,) walking in rich and proper dresses, and in proper state; while tables all the whole length

of that long walk have been set out with more than a thousand pieces of massy genuine plate, all solid gold and silver! I shall never see the like again, I fear me, Shock:—and yet, God is a good God,—and they do say that the young baronet must, after all, be very rich, considering his long minority.—But those cursed foreign parts, I hate them ever since they turned out so fatal to my darling Alfred. Oh, what a princely master he would have been! Well, I may be deceived; a few years more will show, though I mayn't live to see them; but I will hope,—yes, in God's mercy, I will hope to live to see the upstart waiter's son put out of countenance by a true and worthy descendant of the Beauchamps, and then I shall go to the grave in peace."

Edward lost no sentence of the old steward's soliloquy. Sensible how greatly he was indebted to the bounty of lord Roseville, his gratitude, which was of the highest order, at first impelled him to anger at the degrading epithets which he had heard coupled with his benefactor's name; but the age, simplicity, and faithful attachment of the accuser so completely won his affection, that, in his admiration of old Adam, he soon lost all remembrance that he belonged to the rival of his patron. His eyes were riveted upon his venerable form, and his ears caught even his sighs.

Adam now attempted to rise from his seat of turf; but, leaning upon his stick for aid, that faithful companion of many a walk at this moment deserted him; it fell from his hand, and the old man was precipitated head forwards a very considera-

ble way down the hill. Edward, shrieking involuntarily, darted in an instant to his aid; the dog barked and howled; but poor Adam lay extended completely senseless to their demonstrations of concern.

Edward paused for a moment in an agony of doubt what measures to pursue; whether to run for aid, or stay by the senseless corpse. A groan, however, from the sufferer determined him; he ran to the river, and in his hat brought water, with which he chafed the old man's temples, and poured some into his mouth. He had soon the satisfaction to see him open his eyes, and shortly after to find that no bones were broken, and that no very material injury had been the consequence of the accident.

"What angel from heaven are you?" said Adam, gazing with astonishment upon Edward. "No soul was near me when I fell."

"Yes, sir, I was near you; I had been lying on the grass at the summit of the hill, some time before you ascended it; I saw you sit alone, and I saw you fall: I thank Heaven I did, since I have been of service to you."

"You have saved my life, and I must know to whom I owe it."

Here Adam, with the assistance of Edward, was once more upon his legs, but was scarcely able to stand, from the effect of pain, which, as he expressed it, he felt in all his bones.

Edward wished himself able to carry him home.

a monster if I did not love; therefore, good bye, sir."

"Stop a moment," said Adam, "you are young and hasty: I will make allowances for your situation; and if you will only believe me, I will never mention the name of that lord again in your hearing. There now, sit down; and, Mrs. Newton, come make us a cup of tea."

"Well, I must confess," said Mrs. Newton, "Mr. Osborn, say what you will; that what the young gentleman says about the person who is now called lord Roseville is most wonderfully to the point, and shows that he has a prodigious fine genius, and a most amiable heart. It is a treat I have long, long been unused to, to hear such elegant language. I never recollect to have heard such sentiments since the decease of poor Mr. Lambert, whose elegies in manuscript," turning to Edward, "sir, I shall have great pleasure in offering you the perusal of; for ——"

"Hush! Mrs. Newton, hush!" said Adam: "When you get upon the subject of Mr. Lambert and his elegies, there 's no getting you off again.— Come, let us have some tea."

Edward had met Eliza in the village as he passed through with Adam, and was therefore under no apprehension of occasioning uneasiness on account of his absence. A natural wish to extend his very limited acquaintance, and a curiosity to see the interior of the Abbey, strongly operated in favour of his stay, and he sat down to partake of the repast prepared for him.

As soon as propriety permitted, Edward hinted his wish of surveying the spacious apartments of the Abbey; and Mrs. Newton, delighted at an opportunity of showing off her talents to such an elegant youth, as she termed Edward, determined instantly to gratify him, in opposition to the advice of Adam, who, as he could not accompany them, in consequence of his fall, would willingly have kept Edward to converse with him.

With Dinah, her sturdy handmaid, as her attendant to open the windows and carry the duster, Mrs. Newton now accompanied her young visitor through the damp and dreary galleries of the Abbey.

As in their exterior appearance, so in their furniture and decorations, the Abbey and Roseville Park were perfect contrasts. In the mansion of the earl he had beheld with pleasure the witcheries of modern refinement, the combination of comfort and elegance, and the blended attractions of grandeur and grace; yet at the present moment he was equally alive to the impressions of awful delight which a contemplation of the majestic stateliness of the apartments and the regal magnificence of the furniture could not fail to create upon the imagination of a youth of genius. Indeed, the latter produced much the more powerful and lasting effect.

He could not follow with his eye a long series of family portraits, and be told that this general was the son of that archbishop; that the prelate himself was the son of that ermined judge, the nephew of that cardinal, and grandson of that armed knight:

he could not hear recounted the history of the tapestry-rooms, where the adventures of some of the earliest ancestors of the Beauchamps were wrought into action by the fair fingers of their ladies; nor listen to the stories of tradition, which explained the various symbols of their armorial badges; nor view the antique weapons with which they fought, nor the tattered banners which they had purchased with their blood:—Edward could not see and hear these things without imbibing something like the spirit of those times, to which they seemed, as it were, to carry back his own. He felt sensations amounting almost to devotion and enthusiasm for a family of such antiquity, and suffered his warm imagination to place him in the situation of a descendant of these illustrious ancestors, till his heart beat with emulation of their proud achievements.

The bursts of noble feeling, the sentiments of veneration which escaped his artless lips, charmed the old house-keeper beyond the power of her expression; and when the shadows of approaching night compelled them to return to the steward's room, without having seen one-third of the Abbey, the same sentiments repeated, and the regret which he expressed at leaving the noble mansion, caused old Adam to forget his accident; and, starting up in admiration of such a youth, he pressed him with ecstasy to his bosom, and blessed him; concluding his speech with—

"O that it had pleased God the noble Alfred had lived, and that into his hands you had fallen, instead

of such a —!" mushroom he would have said, but he recollected himself and paused.

Edward embraced him affectionately, and with promises of a renewed visit the next day, returned home to astonish Mrs. Enfield and Eliza with the store of romantic ideas and sentiments which this accidental visit to the Abbey had inspired. The first words he spoke on entering the cottage were—

"Oh! why was not I born in these days?"

"What days?" said Eliza.

"Those ancient times, when such deeds were done as are recorded in the tapestry-rooms at Beauchamp Abbey. What a noble fellow was the first Richard Beauchamp, commonly called the Generous!"

"Pray, what mighty deeds did he?" inquired Eliza, smiling at his energy.

"He conquered three hostile barons, who at the same time besieged his castle, which in those days stood near the spot where, in fourteen hundred and forty, the foundation of the present Abbey was laid. These cowardly varlets led their vassals, at midnight, against the castle of baron Beauchamp, and, on a preconcerted signal, attacked it in three different points at the same instant. Richard repelled them all with slaughter, and took two of the barons prisoners. Oh! if you were to see the noble Richard, as he is exhibited in different parts of the storied tapestry, the blood would mount into your cheeks as it did into mine. In one place he is seen charging the assailants at the head of his brave followers, who are rushing from a sally-port;—in another, wresting the

broken javelin from the treacherous baron John, and seizing him with his own hands a prisoner. Then again, after the victory,—behold him, full of majesty, in the bannered hall, publicly haranguing the two captive barons upon the baseness of their treachery (for they had broke a truce), and then generously restoring them their liberty. Oh, what a glorious scene! The warriors' plumed helmets raised in the air; the ladies waving their embroidered scarfs; the pages running to and fro with massy goblets filled with wine; the minstrels striking chords of victory; while all the time the gallant Richard Beauchamp stands with a modest air, as if unconscious of the homage paid him. O that I had lived in times like those! for then I could have won myself a name, in spite of evil destiny; had she then done what she now has—robbed me of my father's——"

"Why, Edward!" said Mrs. Enfield, half alarmed, and completely astonished at the enthusiasm which his manner no less than his words displayed: "My dear boy, this visit to the old Abbey has turned your brain!"

"No;" replied the boy with ardour; "it has only warmed my heart. To-morrow you shall both go with me; and if you do not feel as I feel, it will not be because you are not mad, but because you are not men.

The impression wrought upon the mind of the old steward by the visit of Edward to the abbey was highly favourable to the latter. Adam longed to behold again the wonderful boy, as he styled him,

with scarcely less ardour than Edward panted for a further knowledge of the interior of the old building, and a more intimate acquaintance with its venerable domestic.

Early the following day he repaired to Beauchamp abbey, and was received with joy. Adam, completely recovered from the effects of his fall, now accompanied him from one end of the old pile to the other, intermixing his descriptions of the place with various anecdotes of its former masters.

All that he heard, all that he saw, increased the desire of Edward to hear and see still more. The gossiping garrulity of old age itself was taciturnity and reserve, compared with the eager inquiries of this young and ardent auditor.

The whole of that day and the next he devoted to this new species of enjoyment which accident had afforded him. With Mrs. Newton, the housekeeper, he was no favourite than with Adam. He recited to her manuscript poetry of which she had spoken in her first interview, and evinced such taste and feeling in the recital, as would have won the admiration of judges far more competent than Mrs. Newton. Her idolatry was, however, confirmed by this talent of her young idol, and she joined with Adam in his adoration of such a phenomenon.

From one or other of these ancient oracles of the family, Edward, in a very few weeks, gleaned a large portion of the biography of the Beauchamps.

A new acquaintance and a new course of studies were, however, about this time introduced to him.

The long absence of lady Roseville abroad had not in the least degree lessened the anxious care she felt for the future welfare of her charge.

It happened that a worthy clergyman, advanced in life, was strongly recommended to her patronage, having passed through a series of disappointments. Combining her bounty to Mr. North with her just views of Edward's improvement, she procured for the former a curacy near Roseville Park, and assigned to him a suite of apartments in that mansion, with a liberal salary, on condition that he would undertake to instruct Edward in such branches of education as his situation had hitherto precluded him from obtaining; as lord Roseville had, from year to year, postponed removing him from Mrs. Enfield's; and at length had determined that he should remain there till his own return to England.

The arrival of this clergyman occasioned some interruption of Edward's frequent visits to the abbey; and Ovid and Virgil [illegible] called, for a time, the influence of old Adam Osborn and the abbey antiquities over his youthful mind.

Mr. North, though a sound divine and an excellent scholar, was neither a bigot nor a pedant. The principles of truth which he inculcated, and the lessons of literature which he delivered, were congenial alike to the feelings and the taste of his pupil, and he had the satisfaction of beholding him make a progress in knowledge which reflected honour on both.

Several years were thus spent with mutual satis-

faction by master and pupil; during which time Edward acquired considerable knowledge of the Latin and Greek classics, and went through a course of English reading, judiciously selected and most usefully commented upon by Mr. North.

Various causes still detained the Roseville family abroad. Their foreign excursion was productive of very important, though undesigned advantages to Edward. The earl of Roseville, during his residence at Milan, accidentally met, at the hotel of a nobleman, a celebrated Italian painter, of the name of Palmoretti, who had just finished some admirable works at the villa of this nobleman, and who was then upon the eve of his departure for France, with a young French pupil, named Dubois. The ostentation of the wealthy Englishman prompted him to offer a very large sum to Palmoretti to paint the banquetting-room at Roseville. The artist readily acceded to the overtures of the earl, and accordingly arrived in Cumberland with Dubois, his pupil. They took up their residence at Roseville park, where it was calculated the intended works would detain them at least three or four years.

As Mr. North was an inhabitant of the same mansion, and as Edward was almost a daily visitant there, an intimacy naturally ensued between them and the foreigners whose manners were highly fascinating. The philosophical irreligion of the Italian, and the libertine principles of the Frenchman, might indeed have proved pernicious to the young mind of Edward, had not the example, no less than the *precepts, of his* excellent tutor preserved it from

contagion. Under his inspection, on the contrary, the advantages which he derived from the society of these foreigners proved very important to the formation of his character, as they were the means of his acquiring accomplishments which, in so sequestered a state of life, it was almost miraculous that he should obtain.

Palmoretti was not merely an admirable painter; he excelled many professors of music in his knowledge of that science, and even in Italy was admired for his performances on various instruments. With the genuine enthusiasm of a zealot, he experienced unbounded pleasure in making proselytes to his studies, and in the young Montagu, as he styled Edward, he found a pupil whose capacity and perseverance surpassed his most sanguine wishes. He in consequence grew extremely fond of him, and scarcely ever suffered him to be without either an easel or a violoncello.

Dubois, on the other hand, with the gaiety of a Frenchman, aimed to laugh him out of his rustic gait and studious lounge; jeered him upon his clownish air, and insisted upon teaching him to fence and to dance. In this manner Edward most pleasantly acquired the accomplishments of music, fencing, and dancing, and obtained no inconsiderable knowledge of the Italian and French languages. It was thus his good fortune to combine the advantages of innocence and health, which a retired country education yields, with the acquirements which are, in general, only to be obtained by risking the young mind *in the lottery* of a public school, and enervating the

youthful faculties in the hot-bed of a luxurious metropolis.

Thus dividing his time between grave and lighter studies, in visiting alternately his venerable friend at the abbey, and his gay acquaintances at Roseville park, Edward's years rolled on, and he gradually overcame in a great degree, the effects produced on his mind by the mysterious stranger.

CHAPTER VII.

A WOODMAN.

WHEN Edward had attained his one-and-twentieth year no further change had taken place, nor had any incident worthy of notice occurred either at Roseville Park or Beauchamp Abbey. The earl and his family still continued abroad, and Adam Osborn still remained the unmolested governor of the Abbey.

Regular remittances arrived, with very kind letters, from lady Roseville to her protégé; but no plan for his future life had yet been even hinted at.

At this period Edward was in outward form the man; his mind was well informed, and his heart was uncorrupted. His person, which was above the middle stature, was gracefully noble, his complexion was fair and ruddy, and the well harmonized features of his face, the placid smile that adorned his lips, and the sparkling fires that beamed from his eyes, indicated in the most striking characters, the suavity, the benevolence, and the intelligence of his spirit.

Sometimes, indeed, a transient shade of sadness rested on his brow, when the recollection of the uncertainty of his birth and the inactive dependency of *his present situation* obtruded upon his mind; but

these were specks of clouds which, in that sanguine season of man's life, the slenderest rays of hope would instantly dispel.

Sometimes, with a heart-drawn sigh, he would exclaim, in solitude—

"For what purpose was I rescued from the deep? —To eat the bread of idleness thus day after day; to feed on the precarious bounty of a man whose face I never saw, and whose future intentions respecting me are unknown? Would to Heaven I had been born the acknowledged son of the lowliest peasant, rather than be that undefined shadow that I am! No flattering hopes would then have lulled me into idle dreams of splendid origin; no vain bounty would then have held my hands from labour, or palsied the exertion of my faculties! O that I were even a shepherd's son! To demonstrate filial love, to merit and obtain parental blessings, would prove exhaustless sources of delight: the very toil that wearied me to sleep would be crowned with sweetest peace; and I should hail each morning's sun with tranquil bosom and a grateful heart!——But I!—Is not a slave's a happier lot than mine?—He knows the worst that Fate can inflict on him; knows that he can fall no lower in the scale of human beings!—while I am slave alternately and equally to despair and hope! They struggle for possession of my mind; and if the paradise of hope be mine one hour, the cavern of despair imprisons me the next!"

Sometimes, indeed, this discontent expressed itself in pettish remarks, to Mrs. Enfield, upon the

long absence of his patrons abroad, and upon the uncertain prospects of his future destination.

"Edward! dear Edward!" observed that excellent woman, in reply to some such effusions as the above, "this is disease of mind. Have you thus early, and ere yet the fascinations or the cares of life are known to you—so soon have you forgotten the sacred precepts of religion, that for the humble gratitude which once attuned your lips to praise your bosom has no longer room? For what rude tempests of swelling hopes and fretful fears have you exchanged the resignation of a Christian! If I speak warmly, Edward, oh! let a mother's interest in your welfare justify my zeal! For more than eighteen years I have marked attentively the progress of your mind: I know your heart, 'tis noble, Edward; and of all the meaner vices, I think, I may defy the power. Yet, believe me, equally fatal to happiness are the errors which result from pride of heart, as those less splendid ones which are the offspring of a little mind. The subjection of the will to reason and to piety is absolutely necessary to the possession of tranquillity. Is not that heavenly guest, think you, as much a stranger to the bosom of the crowned plunderer of nations, as to that of the meanest pilferer? and who would barter a peace that passeth all understanding for the homage of a world?"

The influence of admonition such as this was infinitely valuable to a mind aspiring as was Edward's. There was no hazard, as Mrs Enfield justly perceiv-

ed that the trammels of dependence would become habitually easy, or the food of charity agreeable to a youth of his lofty sentiments and his generous feelings. The danger to be apprehended was the reverse of too much humility; the rebellious restlessness of a spirit soaring beyond the limits which Providence had assigned for the sphere of its duties.

Thus, on one hand, were the effects of a humiliating destiny counteracted by the native greatness of his soul; while, on the other, the lessons of wisdom, and the examples of piety afforded by Mrs. Enfield and Mr. North, converted that very humiliation into a salutary counterpoise to his natural ambition.

Such was Edward when he encountered the following adventure:—He had been out the whole of an autumnal day, shooting, in company with Dubois and lord Roseville's game-keeper, when, towards evening, they began to recollect how far they had wandered from home in pursuit of their sport.

"Now, then, for the shortest road home," said Dubois.

"To the right, then, as soon as we clear this wood," said Edward.

"You mistake, I think," said Dubois: surely the left must be our road; but it is very material to be certain, for if we turn wrong we shall be benighted."

"Yonder," said Edward," is a woodman's cottage; I'll run and endeavour to gain correct infor-

mation. Walk on gently, and I'll overtake you before you reach the road."

Away ran Edward. With the object to which he was running in view, he entirely forgot that he was crossing and recrossing a variety of paths until he reached it; then, having failed in obtaining the information he sought, as none of the inhabitants were at home, he was about to run back to his companions; and then, with perplexity, he saw his error. He stood still for a moment to recollect himself: his eye wandered from path to path, but they were so thickly covered with trees, and so uniformly choked up with underwood, that they all presented precisely the same chance of success. He thought he had run in nearly a straight line to this cottage, and therefore made a brisk effort to rejoin his party, by running, as he thought, the same way back.

Having pursued this plan for a considerable space of time, he had the mortification to find himself suddenly at the edge of a deep morass, on the other side of which was an extensive glade. Thus convinced that he had taken a wrong road, he halted, and pondered upon his situation. It began to grow dark; no light was to be expected from the moon; and, unless he should by accident discover a road out of the wood, there was no other alternative than that of wandering about all night, or seeking some natural shelter, which in that situation was not easily to be found. He now hollaed as loudly as he was able; but no answer was returned. He fired off his fowling-piece, in the hope that one of his friends

would reply by a similar signal. Nothing was heard, however, in answer to his firing or his repeated calling. He climbed a high tree—nothing was discernible from the topmost branch: a misty vapour, rising from the earth, gave to the wood beneath the appearance of a vast lake, and Edward now began to despair of extricating himself from his very unpleasant situation. Thoughts of home, and of those who there anxiously awaited his return, now obtruded themselves, and created the far greater part of his uneasiness: for his personal safety he had not the shadow of a fear.

In this state of mind he wandered about the wood during the space of three hours, by which time it was totally dark, and a chilling rain began to fall thick around him. Fatigued with the toilsome sports of the day, and harassed by vexation, Edward would have gladly reposed upon the earth; but sensible of the imprudence of such a measure, he continued walking a mazy round, and determined to do so as long as he could keep himself awake.

He was, at length, almost compelled to yield to the overpowering effects of fatigue, when, on a sudden, he heard the distant barking of a dog. Electrified by this spark of hope, he aroused himself once more, and walked as fast as the darkness permitted him towards the spot from whence the sound came. Fortunately the dog continued to bark, and by the more distinct hearing of the sound, Edward rightly imagined he approached nearer to the animal, whose tongue was now his pilot. He had pre-

sently the additional satisfaction of discerning, though still at a distance, a glimmering light, which appeared to be in motion. In about ten minutes more, however, he had arrived sufficiently near the object of his hopes to hear and see distinctly. To his astonishment he perceived that the light issued from the windows of the little cottage which had so unfortunately been the cause of his separation from his companions. The flames which had attracted Edward rose from a blazing wood-fire, which shone through the casement. The dog still barked; but the party within appeared to pay no attention to it. Edward now joyfully advanced towards the cottage, and through the window discerned a sturdy woodman, the lord of this little tenement, seated by the fire, with his pipe in his mouth, and his brown mug of ale before him;—a delightful picture of a happy peasant in a land of freedom.

Over his chimney hung his gloves, his hat, his bill hook, and his axe. Before him, fallen asleep from fatigue, sat his wife, and at her feet was a little brown maiden, about ten years old, who was also asleep, reclining her head on the lap of her mother.

Though the first impulse of Edward was to tap at the window and demand shelter, yet so powerful was the impression which the picture before him created, that he paused for a minute to contemplate it.—He then gently tapped against the casement; and in an instant the little groupe were in alarm. He was, however, admitted most cheerfully, welcomed to the fire-side most heartily, and the best

entertainment the means of this noble-hearted host afforded was voluntarily offered for the night, it being absolutely impossible to return to his friends till morning.

"But I'll tell you," said the woodman, "we have no bed to spare:—there is one over head here, to be sure; but there 's a queer sort of body now asleep in it, who would not let you share it, I dare say, if you was his own son. Hows'ever here 's a good warm room for you; we'll clap another faggot on the hearth——Peggy will let you have one of our blankets; and that's better than sleeping in the wood this weather!"

"What is all that noise about, goodman Ruddick?" exclaimed a voice above stairs.

"Nothing;—nothing at all, master Thomson," replied the woodman, making signs to them all to be silent.

"Nay, I heard the wicket opened."

"I have been letting Lion loose, that's all;—do get to sleep, man, do."

The few words that passed afterwards between Ruddick and Edward were whispered: as the woodman said that goodman Thomson was a good lodger, and paid them main well; but was so particular shy, that if he thought any other creature besides themselves were in the house, he would run away from it, even at that time of night.

"So," added the woodman, "you must be off as soon as I call you in the morning; for Thomson will be down by day-break, and if he sees you he'll not

stay another night with us; and that would be a huge loss to us, I assure you."

Edward promised compliance, glad to obtain shelter on any conditions.

Early in the morning, while it was yet dark, the woodman roused his guest. Edward started instantly from his humble couch, and having rewarded the kind peasant for his hospitality, they set out together, by the light of a lantern, to the spot in the wood which Ruddick was then engaged in clearing, as it would have been vain for Edward to have attempted to explore his way before day-light.

By the time they reached the scene of the woodman's labour it was dawn of day. The morning air was fresh and invigorating, and Edward, recovered from his fatigue, felt the glow of youthful vigour in his cheek, and was delighted to hear the cheerful notes of the woodman's song, while each lusty stroke of his arm was answered by the echo of the woods.

In contemplating the freedom and content of this hardy son of labour, Edward insensibly fell into a comparison of his own inactive life and dependent state with that of honest Ruddick,—a comparison which led him into a reverie by no means pleasing, until, starting from the posision in which he was leaning against a tree, he exclaimed—

"I forget the uneasiness of my friends: it is now quite light; pray direct me the nearest way to Roseville Park."

"To Roseville Park!" cried the woodman, throwing down his axe, and fixing his eyes upon Edward,

who was dressed in a green cloth shooting jacket and pantaloons, with his fowling-piece slung at his back; "Why, you ben't game-keeper to that chap, be you? if you be, its well enough old Thomson did not see you: for he hates every thing about that new-fashioned lord as he hates the devil;—and surely, as mischief will have it, yonder he is!—If you be, for God's sake don't own it if he axes you. There he be coming, with my Bet, to bring breakfast."

Edward, turning round, beheld at a distance a man dressed much in the same style as the woodman, with a belt round his loins and a billhook in his hand, and by his side trotted the little girl he had seen the night before, dressed in a red cloak, and carrying a pitcher.

"Who is this Mr. Thomson?" said Edward.

"Aye, friend, if you can tell that," said the woodman with a cunning shake of the head,—"its more than any body knows in these parts."

"He appears to be a wood-cutter like yourself."

"He makes believe to work a little now and then when he's well enough; but, lord, he don't want for money! Sometimes too he's away for weeks and weeks together;—but don't drop a hint that you lay in my house last night. Good-bye to you; walk past him, and take no notice."

Edward fully intended to do as the woodman directed; but as he drew nearer to the man whose notice he was determined to avoid, he found it impossible; for he perceived instantly, even under so extraordinary a disguise, the well-remembered features *of the very* stranger whom he had seen at the

cottage of Mrs. Enfield so many years ago. Edward involuntarily stopped: the little girl dropped a curtesy, and the stranger bowed.

"That be the gentleman that gave mother money," said the artless little girl, whom the woodman had forgotten to caution.

"Money! for what did he give your mother money?" exclaimed the stranger.

Edward now deemed it proper to interfere.

"For a night's lodging, sir," said he.

"A spy, by Heavens, a spy!" cried the stranger: then, to the girl, "Go, go to your father, child."

"Your suspicion wrongs me, sir," said Edward. "Chance, or I should rather say protecting Providence, directed me last night to yonder cottage, or I must have perished in this wood!"

"Why, then, was I told a falsehood, when I inquired the cause of last night's interruption of my sleep?"

"Because the humanity of your landlord would not suffer him to shut his door against a fellow creature in distress; and because his necessities made him seem to comply with your injunctions to the contrary."

"Is this his sophistry or yours, sir, may I ask?"

"Sir, I have declared the truth:—I had been shooting the whole of yesterday with some friends: as night drew on, we found ourselves so far from Roseville Park—"

"From where?—yet, hold! repeat it not again! the hated sound tortures my brain! And yet, can it

be!—yes! your features!—am I right!—speak!—tell me!—did I not see you once at—at——"

"Your conjectures, sir, are right: I am the object of lord Roseville's bounty; your face and form even in this disguise, I recognized the moment I beheld you; and all the painful feelings of my heart are now returning at the recollection of your strange discourse."

"Oh, wondrous! wondrous! if this be chance!—But, is it—can it be so?—Tell me, youth, who sent you hither?—how did you discover a retreat hidden in the recesses of such a wood?—how did you find me?"

"Indeed, indeed, I did not seek you, sir; and even had I motives so to do, how was I to find a clue to one of whom I had never heard the slightest tidings since that hour?"

While Edward spoke, the stranger gazed upon him with intense attention, his countenance gradually relaxing from austere to tender.

"Indeed, sir, repeated Edward, "this our second interview is as much the effect of chance as was our first."

"Neither is the effect of chance!" exclaimed the stranger with energy; "Both have been decreed by an over-ruling Providence!—Oh, poor boy!—Poor injured child! The voice of Heaven, in these almost miraculous encounters, chides me for my injustice; and I will not, cannot longer conceal from you the interest that I ought to take in——in all that concerns you!"

As he spoke, a most powerful conflict of the feel-

ings was visible in his face and manner; while Edward's blood almost congealed within him as the important words struck on his ear.

"You fill me with astonishment!" said he at length. "An interest in my concerns! in me!—O God! and do I really see again one who knows my destiny;—am I not indeed anonymous to all the world! O sir, if you indeed know aught of the dear beings to whom I owe a child's affections, reveal—reveal the interesting truth! Why are you silent? Why do you avoid that question?—You weep.—'Tis then as you said;—my parents are no more.—Yet still, if you indeed can tell me, say who were my parents, that I may at least revere their memory and bear their name? Poor as I am, I never will disgrace it."

"Noble, noble creature!" said the stranger, "why have I shunned you? What contamination could I fear from such a soul?"

"Shun me!" cried Edward; "O heavens! what horror is there in my destiny that can have driven from me the only being from whom I can ever hope to learn it? Oh, sir, if you are not senseless to the feelings of human nature, judge what I must suffer in this moment of suspense, and shorten its keen, its killing agonies!"

"I know, thoroughly well I know the anguish of your heart; and Heaven is my witness, how much I wish to spare your feelings these wounds which Fate in my despite inflicts. But since it is ordained that we should meet, 'twere still more cruel to *withhold* than to reveal all that the peculiarity of the

circumstances allows me with prudence to unfold of the sad destiny of your father!"

"Was he unhappy then?" said Edward tenderly.

"Oh! his life is a scene of woes. When, ten years ago, I saw you at the cottage, I wronged the memory of your mother. Circumstances, which I have only recently discovered, have confirmed her innocence beyond all power of doubt to shake."

"Do I not then behold my father?" cried Edward, kneeling, and clasping his hands together in an agony of suspense.

"Can he be called thy father, who was the murderer of thy mother!"

Edward started; his blood was chilled with horror.

"I see the agony of your mind. Oh! Wherefore have you sought this discovery? 'Tis true, I am—I am your father! And no less true it is, that my accursed groundless jealousy compelled your mother and her friend to flight, with thee, a suckling infant, in her arms. They were delivered by the hand of fate to death; when you were rescued to become the punishment, the torture, of your guilty father!"

"Oh, no, no, no! Recall those horrid words. No! though I will mourn for ever the dreadful loss of her who was my mother, how can I so well administer to the peace of her adored spirit, as by affording every consolation of love and duty to my unhappy father? Oh, let me—let me clasp those knees; let me for ever entwine my arms around

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them, and never from this hour be separated from the presence of my father!"

The stranger wept.

"Oh, do not kill me with this cruel silence. I am young; and perhaps you deem me not sufficiently discreet to be intrusted with all your secret. Be it so:—yet take me to your bosom; convince me only that you are my father! Confirm, I beg, by some one fact, the voice of nature, and the hand of destiny, which thus impel me to your bosom."

"My son!—my son!" exclaimed the stranger, clasping the weeping Edward in his arms. "The time perhaps may come, when evidence, even to demonstration, shall convince the world that I am your father. But till discretion sounds, 'the hour is now arrived,' I ask your heart on grounds of faith alone!—What answer does it make, my child?"

"Oh, sir, whatever be the motives of your mysterious concealment, I bow to your discretion. Whether it be that my vacant heart, having no object on which to bestow the warm affections nature has engendered there, is eagerly desirous to embrace the shadow of an idol, and is therefore too credulous, I know not. However it be, it feels emotions now it never knew before; it beats with new-born ardour; it pants to do you service, and to gain your love, and it fears to lose your favour; it bounds with painful expectation to learn more than it already knows; yet dreads the possibility that further light may change the glimmerings of hope into a blaze of dreadful disappointment!"

"Whatever else of disappointment may await you, of this be certain,—that you have folded to your heart the author of your being. Your father now embraces his only child!—All beyond this truth must yet be mystery. Whether the clouds that now obscure our fate will ever pass away, I myself cannot yet conjecture. Much, nay, all depends upon the events of the approaching winter!"

"So near as that! Is the issue of our fates so near, my father!"

"Your temperament, I see, is ardent. But what, my son, if in that issue, which you rejoice to see so near, your father's life become the sacrifice of his foe's revenge!"

"Almighty God forbid it! Oh, surely the Omnipotent, who shelters innocence and virtue from the shafts of evil, will protect my father!"

"You argue then that he who is thy father must be innocent, be virtuous. O Nature! who shall call thy unsophisticated dictates errors of the heart?"

"What means my father?"

"Nothing,—nothing, child: let that pass:—And if I have uttered sentences that excite your wonder —nay, your suspicion even—do not admit them to your breast as proofs of innocence or guilt. You are too young to gather testimony from such unconnected echoes of the thoughts."

"I will be careful, sir. My only aim shall be how I may best evince obedience to your will."

"One proof of your sincerity I must exact."

"Oh, name it!" cried Edward, with quickness, "that I may instantly comply with it, be it what it

may: For you, sir, I am sure, can exact no compliance incompatible with honour!"

"'Tis SECRECY!—We are here alone: none of human kind are privy to our converse. But the Omniscient, the Omnipresent Being, whose altar is all space, he listens to the vow which I exact; he views the heart, sincere or hypocritical, of which I claim obedience! Are you then prepared to swear before that Being that you will never, without my previous consent, divulge to any human creature aught that I may from time to time communicate to you: nay more, that you will not even to your dearest friend whisper a hint of this our interview; but that in your future conduct and demeanour you will endeavour so to bear yourself, that the companions of your most confidential moments shall have no cause to harbour a surmise of this encounter."

"Implicitly I bow to your directions," said Edward; "and solemnly invoke the heavenly registers of man's thoughts and words to record my voluntary oath of inviolable secrecy."

"Enough!" replied his father. "Now then return to the cottage of the good Mrs. Enfield. Still answer to the name you bear, and conform yourself to all the duties of that station in which you have been reared. Though I have purposely forborne to see you, yet I know every incident that has taken place in which you have been interested;—I am acquainted with the progress of your education; I have attended to the developement of your character, and I have felt the most perfect satisfaction at *the result* of my inquiries. Should you be ordain-

ed to fill no higher rank than that in which your ostentatious patron may choose to place you, the accomplishments you possess, and the virtuous precepts you have imbibed, will prove at least amusements and consolations in any sphere of life:—and should the most sanguine of my hopes be realised, I shall have no cause to blush for my son, whose character I have every reason to believe will not shrink from a comparison with the noblest of his ancestors! Start not at that word; nor erect on the adventitious structure of a noble birth any principles of your future actions."

"Noble birth! noble birth! noble birth!" thrice whispered youthful pride to the swelling heart of Edward. The sod on which he stood appeared to rise beneath his feet; a slight dizziness seized him, as he threw back his head, and his chest became visibly expanded. Almost the same instant he recollected his situation; deep blushes suffused his cheeks, he held down his head and sighed.

"Blessed season of man's life!" continued the father, who had attentively watched his son; "pure days of youth, when the spirit of unsophisticated nature speaks in every look, and is visible in every emotion! O my son! dear image of the most injured of her sex! you cannot know how much more painful is this concealment to my own heart than to you. I see the rising curiosity, the anxious suspense of your bosom; yet I dare not, even to my own child reveal myself. Already I fear that I have said too much: let us now embrace and part. If possible, you shall see me soon again; at all

events you shall hear from me: but such is the peculiar cruelty of my fate, that at present I can disclose no more! And remember, I charge you, remember my injunction. A premature discovery would be attended with no less a sacrifice than the life of your father!"

Edward had a thousand things ready on his tongue to reply to this speech of his father; but the sound of approaching voices at that instant caused the old gentleman to start with evident terror; and, slouching his hat over his face, he motioned Edward with his hand to depart, and turned instantly away. The agonized Edward attempted to follow; but his father turning round with a look of anger, that spoke daggers to his heart, exclaimed in a half whisper—

"Have you found a father only to destroy him? Away—or I perish!"

In a minute they were each out of sight of the other.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MALE RATTLE.

THE joy of Edward's friends at his return blinded them at the moment to the alteration which had taken place in his expressive countenance. The contention of hope and fear, the struggle of discontent against the checks of prudence, the swell of pride, which the reason of a youth of twenty-one could not completely conquer, and the burning thirst of interested curiosity, were all depicted in his face; and would at any other time have excited the inquiries of the most superficial observer. Fortunately the anxiety occasioned by his absence, succeeded by the joy at his re-appearance, shielded him from those inquiries which his ingenuous breast would have been extremely pained to evade.

Scarcely had he related the cause of his absence, when, still further to relieve his embarrassment, a lad arrived at the cottage, to request that he would favour Mr. Osborn with his immediate presence at the Abbey.

"Has any thing particular happened?" said Edward.

"Oh dear, yes, sir," said the lad. "Saving your presence, there be the devil to pay at the Abbey. There be a sort of gentleman captain comed down,

hensive of the worst, dear sir; do not then let the stroke fall too heavily, which has not taken you by surprise."

"Ah, well-a-day!" sighed old Adam; "I did, to be sure, I did fear the fatal effects of his being brought up in foreign parts. I thought he would come to old England with outlandish notions unknown to his noble predecessors; but I did not once dream that he would bring home his Italian mother. But I forget,—I forget; I sent for you here, my dearest Mr. Edward, I sent for you here to speak to you alone; for that puppy, that captain Neville, has brought down a mob of people with him, who are at this moment turning every thing upside down in the Abbey."

Here old Adam paused, and Edward in vain attempted to moderate the excess of his indignation and grief. His anger, his regret, his contempt, and his vexation, were extreme, and for a time prevented his entering upon the business of his interview. When at length he was sufficiently calm for that purpose, Edward underwent a most affecting trial of his sensibility. The old man put into his hands a packet sealed, which, he told him, contained a will, by which all the property he possessed, amounting to three or four thousand pounds, was at his death bequeathed to Edward.

"I have reserved it till I was convinced," said the old man, "what was the character of sir Everard. For, had he possesed the spirit of his ancestors, had he gloriously resolved to restore the splendours of the ancient seat of his family, he would have

needed every guinea, and he should have had them all. Oh, many a little whim and fancy, aye, some comforts too, have I denied myself to add one guinea more to my long hoarded stock; hoping that, however little, I was still somewhat aiding and assisting in recovering the glories of that name and family from whose noble bounty I received my first penny. But as it is, I might as well give sand to the preservation of a whirlwind, as money for such a purpose,—to this tool of his Italian mother,—who, as you perceive, no more values the reputation of his ancestors, than if they had been shoeblacks or waiters! Take, therefore, you this free gift, my noble youth, and you will find that I have only troubled you in return with one request:—— namely, that you will see these bones laid in the earth as near as possibly can be granted to that vault under the altar in the chapel, where my honoured masters and their ladies, and their children rest."

Edward was spared the pain of reply, and prevented from returning the packet, as he was prompted to do, by the appearance of Mrs. Newton, dressed in her calash and tippet, followed by a maid-servant carrrying a trunk.

"Don't go in! don't go in, Mr. Osborn, they'll be the death of you! Such graceless wretches these eyes never saw before. The captain has given the fellows leave to break open the cellar, as you were not in the way; and they have made beasts of themselves; and the auctioneer and the captain are not much better. Oh, Mr. Montagu," continued the

old lady, "that ever I should live to see this day! They're ransacking every hole and corner, to take an inventory, as they pretend; but such coarse jokes upon our poor dear dead mistresses and masters, Mr. Montagu, as would make your blood boil!"

"Madam!" Edward exclaimed, "it *does* make my blood mount into my brain to hear of insults which it is impossible sir Everard will pardon, much less sanction. Return, madam. Come, sir; these bullies presume upon your years, and make that, which is the strongest claim upon their respect, the cowardly sanction of their licentious ribaldry:—only empower me, as your friend, to protect you, and let who dare insult you."

Edward hurried them, as fast as old Adam could hobble, into the hall. Scarcely had they entered, before a general laugh assailed their ears from a small eating-parlour, of which the valet, footman, and two postillions, of captain Neville, had taken possession. Then followed this conversation, with the omission of oaths.

"Here's the old cat again, Ned."

"Was ever such a queer quiz! I say, Jerry, she'd frighten your leaders if you crossed her in a narrow lane."

"She should frighten no more, then; for I don't see what use such spavined old devils are of in this world."

"I say, Jerry, what a most delicious bit of fun she would make for lady Emily Roseville's Fanny! That gipsy is so satirical, you know.—How she would take her off!"

enough, and therefore they resolve that they shall now enrich them.

"Monsters! unnatural monsters!" cried old Adam, striking his head with fury; "The Abbey to be pillaged by one of its own masters! Impossible! Impossible!—'Tis worse than sacrilege—it is self-murder! My eyes shall never see that hour,—No,—God in mercy will take me to himself before that evil day!"

"What a strange old gentleman!" said the captain, who with all his levity could not unmoved behold the agonies of poor old Adam.

"Oh, had but his noble uncle lived!" continued Adam, "Had *he* but lived to bless us with an heir. —Nothing so monstrous could have issued from his loins!"

"No reflections upon your master, neither, Mr. Adam."

"He my master!—Never!—Never! His ancestors have been for threescore years my masters; but he is a degenerate branch of his noble house; a fallen-off branch from the good old English tree, transplanted to a foreign soil, where it has engrafted itself with an outlandish stock. No wonder then he is ashamed to face these mere pictures of his noble ancestors; no wonder that they should prove too much against him!"

Edward did every thing in his power to assuage the grief of his aged friend; but in vain: for while he was exerting his eloquence to this effect, the auctioneer, who had been looking over the pictures,

crossed the hall, and in their hearing addressed captain Neville thus:—

"Well, captain, I have been looking over the whole of the lumber; and unless the baronet can persuade the Antiquarian Society to become bidders for most of the lots, I am sure lord Roseville may get the whole at a public auction for less than he offers; though in saying this, you know, I speak against myself."

"Lord Roseville bid for it!" exclaimed Adam, wildly starting from his seat, "lord Roseville bid for it!! I see it all now;—It's plain enough,—My poor brain burns, Mr. Edward,—May I crave your assistance to my chamber? Thank God I saw you this morning! Remember my last request. This stroke is too much—too much. Your arm, sir, your arm. The waiter's son has triumphed now indeed! Oh, God be praised, the noble uncle of this profligate hears not these tidings—sees not these days!"

He spoke these words with difficulty, and then fainted in the arms of Edward, who conveyed him to his chamber.

"Upon my honour," said the captain to the auctioneer, half seriously, "I am quite out of my cue here; for if I understand the interest of this scene, fleece me! What the old gentleman makes such a pother about, appears to me to be the most natural course of things in the world, Mr. Transit. Here is a young fellow comes into possession of an estate, which a long minority has not made very monstrously large, but which is sufficient to purchase the good

things of this world;—well, he has never seen this fusty old mansion; of course he has no great loving kindness for a collection of old armours, pictures, and tapestry hangings; there's nothing wonderful in that."

"Oh, nothing."

"He means to spend his winters only in London, his summers on the continent. Then tell me, can any thing be more natural than that he should sell for a good price, a parcel of lumber on which he sets no value, for which he has no use?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Well then, lord Roseville has an estate adjoining, and he has long wished to dismantle the Abbey, and convert it into a pile of ruins, as a sort of contrast or foil to his palace. And, if a man can afford to pay for such whims, there's nothing wonderful in his indulging them."

"Oh, nothing."

"Again: lord Roseville is a powerful man; and lord Roseville has a beautiful daughter; I wish to be well with them both—you understand me. Lady Beauchamp manages sir Everard; I have a little influence with lady Beauchamp, and hence results our gallop into Cumberland, Mr. Transit—you take me. You and I can converse on the road to London about all these matters; for when people are too indolent to look after their own affairs, no doubt they must pay those who manage for them for their trouble, eh, Transit? and if you and I make use of our senses, and touch a little of the sweepings of his lordship's *counter in Lom*bard-street by this trip, I am

sure there will be nothing marvellous, or even very new in that, eh, Transit?"

"O—oh,—nothing, nothing, captain Neville: I have always found you a sensible man; and as for the heroics of the old steward——"

"Why, we must leave those sort of people to themselves, Mr. Transit; for dam'me if a sensible man can understand their vagaries."

Edward re-appeared.

"Hem!—Here comes young Juba the second. Well, Mr. Montgomery—Montagu, I beg pardon, how is the old major domo?"

"Mr. Osborn, sir, is extremely ill; I have deemed it necessary to send for medical assistance."

"The devil you have! Why then, in addition to all the gloom of antiquity already here, we shall presently be beset with a *memento mori*, in the shape of some country Esculapius. Transit, my good fellow, you have seen enough, eh!—nothing more to do now than fix the price?"

"Nothing,—nothing."

"Then we can't do better than place ourselves in the situation of one of your own lots, and be going, a-going. Here Jerry, Saunders,—scoundrels!"

"Sir! Sir! Sir!" echoed through the hall.

"Are you sober enough, you varlets, to reach the next post-town to-night without risk to my brains or your own bones? If so, quick, brush! Don't you understand me? Dam'me, if I don't hear the carriage wheels in sixteen seconds you're dead men every one of you!"

Away scampered the men, terrified, but not aston-

ished, being accustomed to his eccentric rapidity. In the same moment captain Neville exclaimed,

"What dilatory scoundrels they are! I can't stand still waiting here all day, Come, Transit, give me your arm: we'll trudge it." Then, turning to Edward; "Will you do me the favour, sir, to tell my fellows that I was out of all patience, and obliged to walk on, to save myself from rheumatism and the ague, and those sort of things?"

"May I beg leave to trouble you with a few words, captain Neville?" said Edward. "You have mentioned repeatedly the Roseville family."

"My dear sir, I talk of nothing else—I dream of nothing else."

"They are well? I hope."

"Well!—As well as health and prosperity can make human creatures. They are at this moment the wonder and the envy of all London! The vulgar stare at their splendour, till their eyes blink like an owl's at the sun, or a cat's at a kitchen fire. The great and the powerful sigh at their honours and wealth, till they pine themselves into such specimens of anatomy as Astley Cooper lectures on."

"They are then in London?"

"Oh no,—not yet arrived."

"Did you not intimate that their splendor and—"

"Yes, yes: but that is only by anticipation.—Though the curtain is yet undrawn, my fine fellow, the town rings already with the preparations that are making behind the scenes! Zounds! do you never read the newspapers?"

"Yes," replied Edward with naïvieté, "we have the St. James's Chronicle regularly sent us."

"Ha! ha! ha! the St. James's Chronicle! ha! ha! ha! What, and so I suppose there you pore over an essay on some new discovery in optics; read an account 'how an old mutton-pie-man was run over as 'he was crossing Piccadilly, and taken to the Mid-'dlesex hospital; that the lord mayor ordered the 'price of bread to be raised one penny in the peck-'loaf, and then proceeded to open the sessions at the 'Old Bailey.' Ha! ha! ha!"

Edward did not exactly comprehend the force of this ridicule; but he perceived he was laughed at, and blushed.

The captain continued—

"My good fellow, you must pardon me; but your ignorance—I mean your ignorance of our world in London—is so amusing, that for the soul of me I can't help laughing. Why, I question if ever you saw the name of the family even mentioned in the St. James's Chronicle."

"Not that I recollect," said Edward.

"No;—but had you daily read the Morning Chronicle, the Morning Post, the Times, the True Briton, the Oracle, the British Press, the Sun, the Star, the Courier, the Globe, the—the—had you read all or any of these delightful diaries of fashionable life, there you might have seen

'That the earl and countess of Roseville, with 'lord Barton and lady Emily, are expected hourly 'from the Continent, at their splendid mansion in '*Grosvenor* square.' Again, 'Lady Emily Rose-

'ville, the lovely daughter of the earl and countess 'of Roseville, is expected to eclipse all the hitherto 'resplendent orbs in the hemisphere of fashion!' Or, thus again, 'As far as beauty, wit, and taste can add 'charms to elevated rank and unbounded wealth, 'the lady Emily Roseville, in whose happy person 'all these *deliciæ* are combined, certainly bids fair to 'outshine every luminary that at present enlightens 'and enlivens the fashionable world."

"Are such things relative to lady Emily really printed?" said Edward.

"Listen again," said the captain. Then assuming a grave tone—

'It is NOT true that the duchess of Drinkwater 'has retired in pique from the metropolis at the ap-'proach of lady Emily Roseville. We have reasons 'for believing that the measure was determined upon 'before the coming out of lady Emily was announ-'ced. There may be other causes assigned for the 'removal of an establishment from the metropolis to 'Edinburgh, without resorting to any such ill-na-'tured suppositions. It is not every family that can 'boast the wealth of a Roseville; and living is cer-'tainly much cheaper in Scotland than in England.'

"This I suppose was meant in kindness to the duchess," said Edward; "but in my mind the contradiction is still more mischievously ill-natured than the assertion. But pray, captain, is it so far true, that the family are hourly expected?"

"True—as the minute hand of St. Paul's, or the weathercock at Lloyd's, my dear fellow!"

Edward *sighed.*

"And is it true," continued he, "that all London are on such tip-toe expectation for their arrival?"

"Equally true," said the captain. "They divide popularity at present with the fever at Gibraltar, and the young Roscius."

"But is it usual in the fashionable world, sir, for unmarried ladies, like lady Emily, to make so much noise at *coming out*, as you term it?"

The captain's chaise and four drew up.

"Zounds! here's the carriage," cried the captain. "However, I will stay to explain that to you; for I perceive, my good fellow, that there is germ in you; and considering you as a sort of Recluse of the Lake, or Tall Boy of the Mountain, you really promise well. Know then, that the most dashing *comings-out* ever known are when a very young, rich, lively girl, like lady Emily, marries some dull duke. But as people, you know, can't always be young, the good creatures have invented for themselves a sort of *second-hand coming-out*, in the *debut* of their daughters; in which way they contrive, by a presentation at court, by galas, fêtes, and newspaper eclat, for their daughters, to live their fashionable campaigns once over again; and, under the pretence of introducing these novices of fashion into the world, they themselves participate in the splendour, luxury, and delights of at least one winter more in London. Thus the countess of Roseville, who poor soul, has been moping these Lord-knows-how-many years among the Alps and the Apennines, poetizing upon Mount St. Gothard, and making snow-balls upon the Great St. Bernard, will, after such a horrid

transportation, doubly enjoy the coming winter in London. For though lady Emily's grand winter will not be until she is marchioness of Arberry, or duchess of Delaware, if old Pomposo would exit; yet as this winter will begin with her coming out, and end with her marriage, we shall, even at the present hour, contrive to *astonish the natives!*"

"Astonish the natives!" said Edward; "Pray who are they, sir?"

"Oh, did you never see one? Consult any looking-glass then, and you'll see one to the life. Adieu poor native!"

Concluding this speech with a laugh at his own joke, he shook Edward by the hand, with a good nature in his face that rendered it impossible to feel offence at his nonsensical rattle; and then hurrying the auctioneer to his carriage, away they were whirled.

CHAPTER IX.

A FRATRICIDE.

EDWARD, having to a certain degree succeeded in tranquillizing the mind of Adam, quitted the Abbey. On his way to the cottage he once more fell into a reverie upon the important discovery of the morning, and his thoughts were wandering into a maze of contradictory conjectures, when they were suddenly called off by the chiming of the bells belonging to the village church, which in a few minutes struck out a loud and merry peal. Edward started—his knees shook—his feet became fixed to the spot where he stood. These bells had been presented to the church by lord Roseville, and were to be rung for the first time upon the arrival of that nobleman at Roseville Park. The inference was plain. "They are come—They are come!" exclaimed Edward; and ere he had recovered from the effects of this sudden announcement, men, women, and children were seen running in all directions along the valley, huzzaing and hollaing,—"Roseville for ever!"

He hurried to the cottage—it was literally deserted. Mrs. Enfield, Eliza, and their old domestic Hannah, had followed the general impulse, and joined the assembly in the Park, which consisted of

nearly the whole population of the parish of Darlington and its environs. Edward threw himself into a chair, and attempted to arrange the confused ideas which the rapid succession of recent events had occasioned.

In the mean time, Roseville Park presented the scene of a rustic holiday. A bevy of servants had already arrived; and the bustle of preparation was visible in every apartment. All the avenues were lined with expecting gazers; and the collected groups were beguiling the time with various sports and frolics.—"Here they come!—Here they come!" was every now and then echoed by some rural wit, who made the disappointment of those believing him the source of laughter to all around.

At length a moving column of dust, accompanied by loud huzzas, the sound of rustic music, and the buzz of an approaching multitude, which had collected from the adjacent villages through which the cavalcade had passed, proclaimed beyond all doubt the arrival of the earl himself. In an instant the Park rung with loud shouts; the beautifully wrought iron gates for the first time unfolded, and two outriders in the most splendid liveries preceded a travelling coach-and-four, in which rode the upper female servants of the establishment; a post-chariot and four followed, in which were lord Barton the heir apparent of all this pomp and wealth, attended by his late tutor Dr. Hoare; the third carriage in the cavalcade was a landau containing lady Emily, whose affable notices of the throng assembled, with her unaffected return to their cheering salutations,

won every heart; while the striking beauties of her face and form became the theme of universal admiration. Two other ladies were in the same carriage with her ladyship: these were Italian ladies of distinction, who had accompanied the Roseville family to England, as guests, with the intention of passing a winter in London. In the last carriage, a superb post-chariot drawn by six horses, came the earl and countess of Roseville.

Though Mrs. Enfield and Eliza had unobtrusively mingled in the crowd, yet the expressive eye of the countess caught that of her protégé, and, instantly letting down the glass, she nodded to her with a smile so significant that the heart of Mrs. Enfield immediately felt all the kind remembrances it implied, and made a grateful response by the same eloquent organ.

"Thanks! thanks! lady Roseville," internally exclaimed the delighted Mrs. Enfield: "that look tells me you bestow all the regard which circumstances leave at your own disposal."

She was just in her conclusion: for lady Roseville had even somewhat exceeded these limits, as the earl broadly hinted, by exclaiming—

"Can't you dispense your civilities without smothering one with dust!"

"I beg your pardon," said her ladyship with unfeigned meekness.

"Who is that woman?"

"Mrs. Enfield."

"What the person who nursed your foundling?"

"The same."

"Is the boy alive, pray?"

"My dear lord, what a question! 'Twas only yesterday I was asking your opinion respecting some method of disposing of him."

"Indeed! upon my word I have too many other things to think of, to have any opinion at all about it. Why don't you put him 'prentice?"

"How you forget!—The young man is of age: I mean, he must at least be one-and-twenty years old."

"What! one-and-twenty!—And have you really been squandering away money so inconsiderately as to keep a great boy at dry-nurse till he is one-and-twenty? Upon my honour, lady Roseville, one would almost imagine that you think an establishment like mine is kept up free of all costs and expense: it 's really inconsiderate."

"Indeed, my dear lord, you must excuse me if I say I am not to blame in this respect: I have again and again endeavoured to draw your attention to the subject of this poor fellow, but you have never listened to me: I have actually advanced the little remittances which have hitherto supported him out of my own allowances."

"Yes, yes, I can believe you; but have the goodness, madam, to recollect, if you please, that people who see you twice in one dress are not apprised of your motives for economy; and it would be quite as well to study the reputation of a man of my rank and fortune, as to squander away money in support

of idle fellows, old and able enough to earn their own living."

The carriage stopped. Lady Roseville hurried away a tear that would start unbidden, and gave her hand to her lord with a smile.

In the saloon the other travellers awaited the entrance of his lordship to pay their respects; and the whole party then proceeded to an inspection of the interior of a palace on which more than sixty thousand pounds had been expended.

Palmoretti, and his pupil Dubois, received unbounded praises from the earl and his son for the admirable paintings with which they had embellished several of the principal rooms.

"Oh! 'pon my honour," said lord Barton, "they crown you, signior:" then turning to his father, "I am bold to assert, my lord, that we have seen nothing superior on the Continent."

"Your lordship excepts the productions of Raphael, Corregio, Salvator Rosa, and a few others, I presume?" said Dr. Hoare.

"I see no reason, doctor, for the exception," rejoined his lordship: "I venture to say that no Italian master received so much for any of their labours as my father will pay the signior for these performances."

"And yet," replied the doctor, "the family of the Medici, and some of the popes, were tolerably munificent patrons of the arts too."

"There seems no necessity for this discussion of the comparative merits of dead and living artists

and patrons," said the earl, angry at the insinuation of the doctor: "it is sufficient for me that there is certainly nothing in England that can be compared with such productions as these before us."

"Has your lordship ever seen Barry's paintings, in the room of the Society of Arts and Sciences, in the Adelphi?" said Dr. Hoare dryly.

"Not I," replied the earl; "but you must differ, doctor, from all the world. Look at that picture of villagers dancing; you surely would not insinuate that any other than an Italian pencil could produce such a painting!—observe particularly the lovely form of that nymph, who with such exquisite grace of attitude is striking the tambourine!"

"It is undoubtedly excellent," said the doctor; "but, surely, my lord, you will not confine perfection to the Italian school!"

"Nay, who have we in England, I ask, that could have produced any thing like it? I appeal to every one present, if they ever saw such a picture, taken altogether, from the pencil of any English artist."

"I am not, perhaps, sufficiently impartial to judge on this point," said lady Paulina, one of the Italian ladies; "but certainly I never saw a picture which altogether so well pleased me; and that beautiful nymph is the most finished and expressive figure in the group."

"And I have discovered a resemblance to that fine face in lady Emily," said the sister of Paulina.

"Positively you are correct," said lord Barton. "Come here, Emily; here is a portrait of your

ladyship, painted by inspiration, when you were a thousand miles distant from the artist."

Every one agreed that the resemblance could scarcely have been more striking had lady Emily sat to the painter.

Lady Emily, who had been asking Palmoretti and Dubois to explain some historical subjects, obeyed the summons.

"O, you flatterers!" said she with vivacity.

"No, really;—really no;" echoed the whole party.

"I will be judged by the painter himself," said lady Selina, who had first discovered the likeness. "Tell me, signior," continued she, addressing Palmoretti, "and tell truly now, is not that portrait very like lady Emily?"

"The impression it has produced proves the powers of recollection," said Palmoretti; "it was painted as a likeness of her ladyship from memory."

"How!" exclaimed the earl; "designed, signior!—painted from memory!—from the resemblance, too, of a face you scarcely saw for a day?"

"Your lordship will forgive me, I am sure, if I relate the whole affair. That picture is not my production; but, from the approbation bestowed on it, I am proud to say it is done by a pupil of mine."

"By Dubois!" exclaimed the earl, blushing with shame: "well, I could have staked my fortune it was the work of an Italian! However, doctor, it is still the Italian school."

"True, my lord," observed Palmoretti, "it is by a pupil of the Italian school; but not Dubois: it is the performance of an English youth whom your lordship has adopted, as I am told——young Mr. Montagu."

The earl started, bit his lip, and blushed still a deeper red. Lady Roseville could not resist the expression of—

"I am delighted to hear it! Will not such talents procure the young man a most honourable subsistence, signior?"

"You forget, madam," said Dr. Hoare sarcastically, "the youth is an Englishman."

"Let us look at the library," said the earl with a frown, and led the way immediately.

Lady Emily held down her burning face, while officious memory now presented to her imagination the attentive gazes of the handsome little foundling, who so many years ago had witnessed her dancing on the lawn with the tambourine; the recollection was painful, but she could think of nothing else.

Lord Barton lingered a pace or two behind, looking at the picture, and, affecting great incredulity, yawned out—

"Well, signior, it would be unpolite, perhaps, to express any doubt of your miraculous story: we have an instance of wonderful genius certainly in Opie, you know; so that I do not positively say, signior, that the thing is impossible!"

By this *time the* party had entered the library.

The chaperone here was the worthy Mr. North, who had been installed librarian.

The earl, with a view to turn attention as quickly as possible from the *adopted youth*, as Palmoretti had styled Edward, very graciously condescended to introduce Mr. North to Dr. Hoare, as a profound scholar and most exemplary divine. Then presenting, in turn, the doctor to Mr. North, he said—

"Doctor Hoare, Mr. North; not an ecclesiastic, but an LL D.; a gentleman in every sense worthy your regard; but one who will differ with you on all subjects, merely to avoid the suspicion of having no opinion of his own."

"I can't agree to that, my lord," said the doctor.

"There, I told you so," said his lordship: "you see how he confirms my assertion by his contradiction."

"What a superb collection of books!" exclaimed lady Paulina; "and how beautifully arranged!"

"Yes," said lord Barton; "a thing of this sort costs a few English guineas. Have you a notion what the expense is, sir?" addressing his father.

"No, really," said the earl; "I left the matter entirely to Mr. North here, and to the booksellers."

"I am delighted with your analytical catalogue, Mr. North," said the doctor, turning over the leaves: "it must have occasioned you an immense deal of trouble, and proves a knowledge of books not common even among scholars. I was not many ago at

the marquis of L——'s, in London, who has perhaps as many books as are here; but the titles of hundreds of them were obsolete to the most learned, and therefore remained stationary on the shelves, except to the *curiosi*. This manuscript catalogue is actually a history of literature, a complete bibliography, and renders the library itself unique. I assure your lordship," turning to the earl, "that neither in England nor elsewhere is there so valuable a collection, with so valuable a key."

"We are, then, very much indebted to your labours, Mr. North, I am sure," said the earl.

"The honour of your lordship's approbation," said Mr. North, "I must share with another:—I have received the most valuable assistance in this work from a youth, whose conduct and attainments reflect the highest honour on your lordship's bounty, and must, I am sure, when known, afford you the highest satisfaction; I mean Mr. Edward Montagu."

"Again Mr. Montagu;" exclaimed the earl, knitting his brow; while the countess, though she rejoiced at what she heard, trembled lest the haughty temper of her lord should take alarm at the accomplishments of one whom he deemed nothing more than an object of his charity."

"Pray, who is Edward Montagu?" said lady Selina: "he must be a clever Englishman; I should like to see him."

"O," replied lord Barton, "he is merely a poor boy that my father accidentally met with at Brighton some years ago, and preserved from the work-

house. He was saved from shipwreck by a Chinese, who died the same hour, I believe. The ship proved to be an Indiaman; but nobody else was saved to tell who or what the infant was; nor does any one know to this hour."

"Why, then," said doctor Hoare, "lady Emily's portrait may be the production of an Italian, after all."

"This is great foolery!" said the earl, stepping out of the library upon a fine lawn level with the floor.

He was followed by the rest. They promenaded the pleasure-grounds and part of the park. A variety of observations were made upon the picturesque scenery which embellished the landscape; and the antique towers of Beauchamp Abbey, forming the grandest object in the perspective, afforded an ample source of conversation. Lord Roseville and the gentleman, with lady Emily, had loitered to examine some antique statues sent by his lordship from Italy. The countess and her two guests formed a separate group. The following dialogue ensued.

Lady Paulina. "What is that venerable pile of building called?"

Lady Roseville. "Beauchamp Abbey.

Lady Paulina. "Is it a place of worship?"

Lady Roseville. "No—It is the family-seat of a baronet of that name."

Lady Selina. "Beauchamp! Beauchamp!—— Don't you recollect, Paulina, a strange story about

two brothers of that name, English residents at Florence?"

Lady Paulina. "Perfectly well, Selina.—Can it relate to this family?"

Lady Roseville. "It certainly does. The history of these two brothers is to this hour a tale of mystery."

Lady Selina. "May we not be favoured with it, Lady Roseville?"

Lady Roseville. "It is told in few words. Alfred and Everard were the only children of sir Alfred Beauchamp. As the estates of this very ancient family had not increased in value with the increasing expenses of its magnificent establishment, its revenues were by no means equivalent to its splendour. Unhappily a contested election for the county, followed by petitions to the legislature, and a long series of law-suits, involved the estate so much further in debt, that, when sir Alfred succeeded to the title, he found himself in the most painful situation in which a man of honour and feeling can be placed: he was called upon to support the dignity of an ancient and noble family, represented in his person, almost without any pecuniary means. Sir Alfred, however, was endowed with great and good qualities of mind. He soon formed a resolution, which combined the promise of adding to his fortune with the present retrenchment of expenditure. Confiding to an old and faithful domestic at the Abbey, Adam Osborn, the sacred charge of his lady and the two sons I have already named, he repaired with the spirit of old times to

the camp of Frederic of Prussia, and under that great general sought for increase of wealth by the only means to which, in his opinion, a descendant of the Beauchamps could without degradation submit.

"During his long absence lady Beauchamp and her sons constantly resided at the Abbey. The most rigid economy and frugality marked the conduct of the good mother, who fully qualified for the task, superintended the education of her boys personally, and with no other assistant than the curate of Darlington, until the eldest was about twelve years old,—when it pleased the disposer of events to bereave them for ever of their excellent mother. Never shall I forget the different impressions which this event produced upon the two boys. Alfred, whose bosom was the seat of generous emotions, strove like a little hero to conceal the tears of genuine sorrow, that 'spite of his efforts, graced his cheek; while Everard's art was exerted to assume a mock sorrow, which he did not feel. Alfred felt that he had lost a friend—a confidant—an instructor. Everard had never without reluctance submitted to instruction—never without anger yielded to restraint;—and though then scarcely eleven years old, he congratulated himself that he should now be his own master; and, in the joy he felt at his imagined freedom he soon lost even the semblance of grief.

"The news of his lady's death reached the baronet at Breslau the day after a most important victory had scattered laurels on every follower of Fre-

deric's fortune. The share of glory which this English warrior had obtained in that memorable battle was however most dearly purchased. He received a wound, which, though not fatal at the moment, was attended with such consequences as precluded all hopes of recovery. The melancholy tidings from England increased his danger, and seemed to hasten his dissolution. To a brother officer, an Irishman, whom chance placed near him, he expressed a father's wish to see his boys. The nature of his wounds rendered it impossible that he himself should travel; and it appeared almost romantic that the children should be sent for from such a distance—yet it was his wish. It seemed as if he could not die until he had beheld his offspring. Under the care of faithful Adam Osborn, the two brothers reached their father's quarters, where they arrived barely in time to receive his blessing and to behold him die."

Lady Paulina. "Unfortunate man! And how worthy, in human estimation, of a happier destiny! But the poor boys, dear lady Roseville, what must have been their feelings on such an occasion!"

Lady Roseville. "Many a time have I listened to old Adam's description of the scene;—Alfred melted into tears—but Everard was unmoved;—Alfred was with difficulty day after day torn from his father's corpse—but Everard in a few hours turned all his thoughts to the glittering tinsel of the warriors around him. Delighted with the dazzling scenery and lively bustle of the camp, scarcely was *his father laid in a foreign grave*, when he express-

ed to the officer before alluded to his wish to be a soldier. In vain old Adam urged him to return, in vain his brother supplicated.—"He would not," he said "go back to England, to be sent to school or college; he would remain with captain Morrison."

"Lady Selina.. "And did he actually remain?"

"Lady Roseville. "By sir Alfred's will the guardianship of his sons was intrusted to my father, who was his neighbour—Darlington Hall standing at that time on the very spot where we are now walking.

"Captain Morrison wrote to my father, and represented in such strong terms the then existing feelings of Everard, and the promised patronage of the king of Prussia himself for his future advantage, that with reluctance he at length consented to his continuance under the protection and tuition of the captain. Alfred in the mean time returned. The long minority before him, and the advantages already reaped from frugality and retrenchment promising to restore in a considerable degree the ancient splendour of his inheritance by the time he would become of age, my father spared neither expense nor pains in suitably educating the young baronet for that rank in society which he seemed destined to enjoy.

"The male branches of the Beauchamp family were extinct, except in the present line; and the only relation of these two boys, who survived their father, was a sister of their mother who was settled in America. My father's roof, therefore, became *the home of* young Alfred; and, under the eye of

the best of fathers and mothers, he, my brother, and myself were educated. With what feelings of regret do I take a retrospect of these days!—Health —peace—joys ever present—and hopes ever new, were mine for seven happy years of my existence!"

Lady Selina. "This little history, I see, dear madam, leads you to a subject which I know always pains you."

Lady Roseville. "I will only slightly glance at the event alluded to. An attachment, founded on mutual esteem, why should I not say love? took place between the noble Alfred and myself. We plighted to each other vows of inviolable faith, and the prospect of our future union was contemplated with satisfaction and approbation by both my parents. When Alfred was rather more than twenty years old, an opportunity presented itself of his travelling in company with a tried and worthy friend of his guardian. He embarked for Holland, with the intention of passing through France, Italy, and Spain, meaning to return about that time two years to England, when it was arranged that our marriage should take place.

"Oh, how eventful were those two years! In the first year, the death of a beloved mother was quickly followed by the loss of a noble-hearted, but unfortunate, not to say indiscreet, brother. The next spring brought from Florence the dreadful tidings contained in the story of the two brothers, which lady Selina recollected at the mention of Beauchamp Abbey.—I was not aware till that moment that the story was still remembered in Italy."

Lady Paulina. "I have heard it a hundred times related by the countess, my aunt, who happened to be on a visit to the marchesa della Melzi, at the very time."

Lady Roseville. "I have heard the story told with so many variations, that it would oblige me, lady Paulina, if you could recollect the exact particulars, and would repeat them. I would thus far myself explain—that Everard Beauchamp received such an education, and imbibed such principles, as might naturally have been expected from his residence in such a camp. His very instructor and guide, captain Morrison, was an example of all that is profligate and licentious, with only the virtue of courage, to balance almost every other vice which can degrade humanity. Formed after such a model, and in such a school, with a disposition naturally inclined rather to the ferocious than the gentle, Everard, at the age of eighteen, was as manly in appearance, and as experienced in licentiousness, as any of the many adventurers who had brought to the camp of Frederick specimens of all the vices of all the capitals of Europe.

"Such an one was Everard, when, previously to the departure of Alfred from England, it was arranged that the brothers should have an interview at the palace of the marchesa Melzi."

Lady Paulina. "It was there, lady Roseville, as I have before observed, that the countess Belvidere, my aunt, was on a visit, when the handsome Englishman, as Mr. Everard Beauchamp was

styled, arrived with his friend, captain Morrison, and the young marquis Melzi, then nearly of age. How the marquis first became acquainted with young Beauchamp, I never understood; but a similarity of manners, dispositions, and pursuits, appeared to unite this triumvirate in the strictest bonds of association. The mother of the young marquis was fond of her son to a weak and ridiculous extreme. He was guilty of the most vicious excesses; yet, in her eyes, he was a paragon of virtue; and, though the whole city of Florence rung with reprobation of his profligate conduct, the marchioness could never bear to be told that her son had a failing. Everard Beauchamp, Morrison, and the marquis, made the Melzi palace merely their occasional rendezvous for dining, or sometimes supping. They never slept within its walls. When this circumstance was noticed to the old lady, she would reply in the common-place way, that young men would be young men; and one could not put old heads on young shoulders.

"When the day for sir Alfred Beauchamp's arrival was fixed, these three friends suddenly changed their course of action. My aunt happened accidentally to overhear the reason for this from captain Morrison.

"'The old quiz that accompanies this virtuous elder brother of yours,' said he to Everard, 'would smoke us in an instant, and would be hurrying the grown baby away from us in a moment, lest we should corrupt his saintship; and our work, my dear boy, can't be done in a minute, you know, eh,

Melzi, can it? So, surely, my boys, it's worth while to be cautious, if we mean to succeed.'

"'Who doubts success?' cried Everard; 'I'd strike the blow myself, if needful, man. This arm has not sent so many poor devils to the shades, who never injured me, to shrink at last from the man who stands between me and a princely fortune; for I find guardee has nursed it to some purpose.'

"A loud laugh succeeded this horrid speech, and enabled my aunt to retreat unobserved from an accidental concealment.

"Convinced that it would be merely waste of time to suggest her fears to the marchesa, she determined to keep a strict watch herself upon the actions of the trio, and to warn the baronet of his danger, if circumstances should induce her to believe it necessary.

"Sir Alfred Beauchamp arrived, with his venerable friend Mr. Montagu."

Lady Roseville. "One of the worthiest beings that ever wore the form of man. He was the Mentor of sir Alfred, as he had been my father's. He was idolized in our family; and it was from respect to his memory, you must know, that I named the unfortunate shipwrecked infant—Edward Montagu."

Lady Paulina. "The first few days after their arrival passed without any incident that strengthened the apprehension of my aunt; and she began to cherish a hope that she had mistaken the purport of

the dialogue she had overheard, when her suspicions were too fatally confirmed.

" One evening it was proposed by Everard Beauchamp, and agreed to by the other two gentlemen, that they should visit the opera. My aunt, attended only by her maid, followed them, to observe their motions. During the performance the party separated; sir Alfred and Mr. Montagu were left alone; Everard, Morrison, and the marquis Melzi, entered the box of a beautiful stranger, then lately arrived at Florence from Naples, who passed for a person of quality, and who, though extremely young, had established a reputation for extraordinary powers of mind perverted to the worst of purposes. My aunt remarked with horror the significant gestures and repeated pointing to the baronet, which took place in signora Belloni's box. She hesitated in her determination, whether to go immediately and reveal her fears to the baronet, or to continue her attentions upon the party she suspected. While she doubted, the signora and her two friends left their box, and in a few minutes entered that where sir Alfred and his friend were listening to the opera. In a few minutes more they all disappeared together, though the opera had scarcely begun. My aunt hurried home overwhelmed with apprehension. Her fears were increased, when she was informed that the count's servants had returned for flambeaux and fire-arms, as the party had gone to sup at a villa belonging to signora Belloni, a few miles from Florence.

"Midnight arrived, and the marchesa Belvidere was retiring to her chamber with a foreboding heart, when a general confusion throughout the palace soon proclaimed the fatal tidings, that the party had been attacked in a wood by banditti; that the marquis, Morrison, and Everard Beauchamp, had escaped with severe wounds, but that the baronet and his friend, it was feared, had fallen a sacrifice to the savage cruelty of the assassins. Immediate search was made by the officers of justice, and the mangled remains of the two unfortunate Englishmen stripped and disfigured with ghastly wounds, were discovered in a foss, where the murderers had thrown them."

Lady Roseville. "Oh, horrible! horrible! Never will this heart be healed of the deep wound which it received, when the horrid tidings reached us here;—nor can I with the greatest stretch of charity acquit the brother of my ever-lamented Alfred of the guilt of being at least accessary to the barbarous murder."

Lady Selina. "The wounds of him and his hardened companion might possibly have been self-inflicted."

Lady Paulina. "It was so whispered at the time. At least they soon were healed; and, to the surprise of every one, no further inquiry into the affair was ever made by the surviving Beauchamp; who, assuming the title of his brother, as I suppose you well know, very shortly after the interment of sir Alfred, publicly espoused signora Belloni."

Lady Roseville. "Too well I know each circumstance that followed—But for the present we will waive the subject—The gentlemen approach—Lord Roseville is entitled to my best affections as a husband and a father, and I would on no account give him cause to think he has a widowed heart in mine."

Lady Selina. "Ah, dear lady Roseville, how much do we all owe to your noble example! Three deaths in two short years!—A mother—a brother—and a betrothed lover! How many of our weak sex, even with the best of hearts, would have sunk beneath the weight of such accumulated misery—while you——"

Lady Roseville. "Oh, not on me—not on me, my love, bestow this praise. If my poor heart has been enabled to endure, with some degree of christian fortitude, those arrows of affliction, which the hand of time itself cannot extract, theirs be the merit, who in earliest infancy instilled into my mind those sacred truths, which teach mankind justly to appreciate all temporal good and evil; which, raising the soul above the grovelling impulses of self, lead it, and sustain it, in a course of duties worthy of its celestial nature! But for this conviction, all the glories of creation would have faded to my sight when Alfred Beauchamp died. 'Twas then a father's voice recalled me to a recollection of what I owed to him—to society—to God. 'Twas then, too, that I saw the ravages which adversity had inflicted on the best of men—and by slow degrees I wrung from his afflicted heart the secret of his irre-

parable ruin, the sad consequence of an only son's imprudence. Roused by a sense of my dear father's anguish, I lived again for his sake. To alleviate his sufferings—to abate his griefs—to tranquillize his heart's despair, became new motives for existence. Soon I saw how much of such a task depended on the sacrifice of every selfish feeling. I saw a path to which filial duty pointed, and filial affection led—I married Mr. Dickens."

Lady Paulina. "Admirable lady Roseville!"

Lady Selina. "Ah, Paulina! where shall we find excuse, if, under such a monitress, we ——,"

Lady Roseville. "Hush, dear ladies—I cannot listen to such unmerited encomiums: and, see, we are observed."

Doctor Hoare (joining them). "So, madam, this Mr. Montagu is to be the universal theme at Roseville Castle."

Lady Roseville. "How so, sir?"

Dr. H. "Nay—you recollect his exhibition of paintings in the saloon, and his literary fame in the library.—Well, madam—The earl was admiring some classical verses, placed under a head of Cicero, in the myrtle walk, in which a very neat compliment to the Roseville family is introduced; when, turning to Mr. North, "We are obliged to you for this, sir," said his lordship.—"No, my lord," says the parson; "the thought and the poetry are both Mr. Montagu's."

Lady Paulina. "I am impatient to behold this prodigy."

Dr. H. "But that is not all, ladies.—Passing the tennis-court, we looked in, to see a painting by Dubois. On the floor lay some foils. Lord Barton took one in his hand, and, flourishing it, displayed considerable elegance of attitude; at the same time exclaiming—'Pray, who fences here? I observe the foils have been used.'—'I have taught Mr. Montagu,' said the Frenchman, 'but his agility and skill are now too much for his master.'—'Montagu fence!' exclaimed lord Barton; 'I think he at least might have been more usefully employed.'

'Now, there's envy in that sneer, my good brother,' said the dear lady Emily;—and do you know, madam, I could have kissed her for such a timely rebuke of my friend."

Lady R. "It is not the first proof of your good heart and sound judgment I have had the pleasure of observing, Dr. Hoare."

By this time they had arrived at the house, which they entered through the music-room, where the earl and his party were already assembled. Several instruments were out of their place, and some sonatas of Haydn were lying open.

"Pray," said lord Barton, addressing himself with a sneer to Dubois, "does not this rustic prodigy sing, dance, and play, as wonderfully as he fences, paints, and poetizes?"

"The signor, my lord," replied Dubois, "has taken great pains to improve the taste which monsieur Montagu displays on the violoncello; and the young gentleman, I assure you, does honour to the

signor. I cannot say much for his dancing, though I have bestowed great pains;—and, as to his singing, it is but la la. His voice is good too; but he likes better to exercise it in the orations of Cicero, the speeches of Hamlet, Macbeth, Cato, and such kind of things, than in vocal music."

"Upon my word," said the earl to his son, "I cannot help saying this is all very ridiculous. You surely estimate my company at somewhat too cheap a rate, to pursue this trifling. What is your subject?—A foundling, whom, thrown in our way, we undertook to save from perishing. I declare to you, Doctor," turning to Dr. Hoare, "I declare that, in the multifarious concerns which press upon my attention, I had absolutely lost all recollection of the existence of such a person, till lady Roseville recalled him to my memory within this hour. And now this brat, whom, nineteen years ago, I saved from the workhouse, starts up in every corner of my mansion, claiming honours, and blandishing talents, as if he were the heir apparent to my title and fortune. How it has all happened, is an enigma, the solution of which I shall not condescend to study. —If it please lady Roseville to explain,——"

Meekness and timidity were naturally lady Roseville's; while habit and respect combined to impress still more strongly upon her feelings humility towards her lord, and a painful sense of his displeasure. She blushed, she trembled, and was silent.

Mr. North, who possessed both discrimination and feeling, saw at a glance the hearts of the earl

and his lady; and, by the dexterous use of an artifice which humanity prompted, at once healed the wounded sensibility of the countess, and gratified the pride of the earl.

"It is I, my lord," said he, "am to blame; and, however painful the weight of your lordship's displeasure must prove, I will not presume to question its justice, if your lordship repels the plea I shall take the liberty of urging in my defence."

Lady Roseville and the whole party fixed their attention upon the speaker. He continued—

"Upon my arrival here, my lord, I found this extraordinary youth, who owes every thing he possesses to your bounty, blessed with such natural powers as fall to the lot of few; and with a disposition in which I could discover nothing to wish altered, unless it were a fondness for solitude, and the indulgence of romantic fancies. I attributed this tincture of mind in a great degree to his peculiar destiny, to his retired and inactive mode of life, under a roof where only females dwelt, and in a neighbourhood which furnished him with no congenial associates. There was an ingenuous display of talent as well as virtue in the boy, that, independently of my knowledge of his story, interested me exceedingly; and, flattering myself that I should be performing at the same time no unacceptable duty to my honoured patrons, I officiously obtruded myself into his society, and succeeded in gaining his confidence and respect. I soon discovered that Edward Montagu had formed an accidental ac-

quaintance with one, whose prejudices were calculated to produce in his inexperienced mind impressions derogatory of your lordship's character and dignity. The old domestic of Beauchamp Abbey, Adam Osborn, had won the heart of the young lover of romance; and, when I became first known to him, had almost intoxicated him with a silly, yet enthusiastic, veneration of old times, old families, old castles, and old follies of every description. Fortunately, the wealth, the taste, and magnificence, displayed in this mansion of your lordship, furnished a most apt and admirable antidote to this disease of mind; and I own I did not hesitate to administer the benefit of its use to young Montagu. I it was, my lord, who brought him to this mansion, and have joined with signor Palmoretti and monsieur Dubois in imparting to him those lessons which I now perceive, for the first time, it was not your lordship's intention he should receive."

"You have laboured to prove, Mr. North, what I should never have doubted—that your motives are good. I confess, I imputed to lady Roseville here, whose kindness of heart, we all know, outstrips the judgment of her head, the good-natured folly of manufacturing that grotesque animal in society—'an accomplished pauper.' And I am sorry, for the young man's sake, that the mistake I have made is not in the article itself, but simply in the manufacturer."

"I cannot join in your lordship's pity," said Dr. Hoare, "'tis misplaced. In my mind, Mr. North

has rendered society a service.—We have too few geniuses at the present day, to spare one for the cobler's last or the plough-share;—though, thank God, we have taken a Bloomfield from one, and a Burns from the other!—and I cannot help saying, that I think it would confer more lasting honour on the name of Roseville, to rescue one such youth of talent from obscurity, than to build a church or found an hospital, and I know the family is rich enough for either."

The frown on the brow of the earl at the commencement of this speech was changed to a half smile at the sequel.

"Compliment and contradiction in a breath, eh, Doctor?" said he. "Well—we'll see this genius, as you style him, before we leave Roseville; and as circumstances have thrown him upon us, we will not desert him if we find he merits our favour. Enough of our time, however, has been bestowed upon the subject; and I must request that we take leave of this romance for the present. I am by no means displeased with your conduct, Mr. North; I only regret that important engagements have hitherto so much occupied my attention, that I have suffered the young man to remain so long in such an idle state of life. Some employment must be thought of for him; but at present a thousand other things call for our attention."

The conversation ended here, and the party separated. Lady Roseville blessed Mr. North for his timely interference,—lord Barton whistled,—Dr.

Hoare expressed a wish to see "the extraordi
young man"—the ladies Paulina, Selina, and E
Roseville, all united in the same wish. Even
they retired, the story of the foundling of the o
did not cease to occupy their meditations.

CHAPTER X.

AN ACCIDENT.

THE party at Roseville Park was augmented the following day by the arrival of the duke of Delaware, and his son the marquis of Arberry, between whom and lady Emily Roseville a matrimonial treaty was nearly brought to a conclusion by the heads of both their houses.

The marquis of Arberry was in his thirtieth year; and possessed, independently of his father, a considerable fortune bequeathed to him by a maternal uncle. He was indebted to nature for a happy disposition and a handsome person; and by his fascinating manners he rendered himself the universal favourite among a very large circle of the fashionable world, of which he might almost be said to be the emperor. His ample revenues, the elegance of his taste, and his unceasing studies after new methods to amuse and delight, occasioned him to be regarded as a model of manners among the very first ranks of society; and he had obtained the reputation of being the first gentleman in the kingdom.

The intimacy between the duke of Delaware and lord Roseville took place at Madrid; and the former who arrived in England some months previous to the latter, immediately proposed to his son the lu-

crative alliance. It so happened that the marquis had just then broken off an attachment to a faithless mistress; and had, with a mixed feeling of resentment and remorse, actually begun to think of marriage. There occurred only one objection to lady Emily, whom he had never seen, and that was the origin of her paternal grandfather. Against this unfortunate blemish in the escutcheon of the lady, the nobility of her mother was to be balanced; and the present rank and fortune of her father, added to his great ministerial influence, it was prudently suggested by the duke, who was not opulent, were more than sufficient to obliterate the memory of the founder of their wealth. The object of the present visit was to take a preliminary survey of the offered bride, and to digest the articles of this family alliance.

A slight acquaintance with lady Emily was sufficient to impress the marquis with a *quantum sufficit* of respectful regard for a modern husband in high life: that is to say, he could discover nothing in her person, mind, or manners, so disgusting as to render it impossible to sit with her in the same carriage occasionally, and now and then to spend a few hours with her under one roof.

Lady Emily on her part had no attachment of the heart; she knew not love as a passion; and the veneration and affection she felt for her parents induced her implicitly to follow their counsels, which she regarded as infallible, and to study their pleasure which was her chief source of happiness. She

received therefore the marquis as her destined lord, and he regarded her as his bride elect.

It was after a few days' consultation agreed that the ensuing winter should be devoted to the initiation of lady Emily among the votaries of fashion, and her introduction to the fashionable world; and that on the birth-day, which closes the fashionable winter, she should be presented as marchioness of Arberry.

The few weeks which were to be passed previously to their entering the metropolis, were to be divided between Roseville Park and Delaware Hall, in Derbyshire; and with a view of exorcising the dæmons of ennui from the lakes and lawns, and hills and dales, where an inhabitant of the fashionable world is in such constant dread of encountering them, several priests of pleasure were invited to mingle with the society at both these places.

While such was the state of affairs at Roseville Park, the mind of Edward Montagu underwent the severest trials. Old Adam continued very ill.—This circumstance distressed him. But his heart was tortured beyond description by the continued absence and silence of the mysterious stranger, who had called himself his father. What was he to think? At times he was almost ready to exclaim with Hamlet—"The thing which I have seen may be the devil! What purpose can it answer," he would inquire, "to any human being to take such pains merely to torment? Why did he appear to me at all if he came only to raise within my bosom high *swelling hopes* of emancipation from the humble, the

distressing obscurity and dependence of my present state, which are never to be realized?"

There was another source of painful disappointment.—The incessant occupation of her time by necessary attentions to her guests, and other important avocations, had hitherto prevented even lady Roseville from calling at or sending to the cottage. This apparent neglect added mortification to disappointment, and weighed down the spirits of Edward to a state of absolute despondency, which seriously alarmed Mrs. Enfield and Eliza for his health and intellects.

Some days after the arrival of the family at the Park had elapsed, when Edward, thus musing to madness on his fate, lay reclined on the borders of the lake, at a short distance from the cottage.—It was noon; his eyes rested on the reflected image of the sun, and vacantly watched the clouds as they appeared to sail across the golden orb. Suddenly a shriek, loud and continued, thrilled in his ears—he started up, and with terror and surprise saw a phaëton, in which sat a lady, rapidly and irresistibly drawn by two horses towards the lake. In vain he threw himself before the maddened animals—in vain he called to the lady to leap from her dangerous seat. In another moment, horses and carriage were plunged into the lake.

The shrieks of the lady, and the cries of Edward, brought out several inhabitants of the village, besides Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, who reached the spot just in time to see the generous Edward rush into the water. He succeeded in rescuing the lady, and

bore her in his arms to land. By this time a gentleman, who proved to be the marquis of Arberry, arrived, with one servant; and presently after came a large party, on horses and in carriages, at full speed.

It was lady Emily Roseville, whom Edward at the hazard of his own life had thus nobly snatched from death. She was conveyed to all appearance dead into the cottage of Mrs. Enfield, where, by the application of proper means, she was restored to some degree of sensibility just as the earl and countess, her parents, entered the apartment.

"Oh, where is my child?—where, where is my dearest Emily?" exclaimed the countess.

"My mother!—my mother!" said the half-recovered Emily, throwing her arms round her neck, and hiding her face in her bosom: "Oh, my dear mother, I am safe—I am safe—but where is my brave preserver? Seek him, my honoured father, seek him, and reward him for the life of your poor Emily."

"Reward him?" cried the earl, in whose breast, however cold in general, nature now kindled the flame of gratitude—"reward him?—Impossible! Who is he?—where is he?—Let me know him!—let me kneel and thank him for a daughter's life!"

Mrs. Enfield, her heart almost bursting with joy and triumph, said,

"O, my lord, he is rewarded—he is more than rewarded, by such a recovery as this! Of all the beings in the world, none could have felt the gratification which I am sure he feels. Any man would

rejoice to save a fellow-creature; but Edward Montagu has not only saved a human being to the world——he has restored a daughter to his benefactor!"

"Edward Montagu!" exclaimed the earl.

"Edward Montagu!" echoed lady Roseville and the ladies Paulina and Selina, while each surveyed the countenance of the other with an expression that seemed to say, "Surely every title to praise is monopolized by Edward Montagu!" Lady Emily was silent: she held down her head, and, with her arms folded across her bosom, whispered a fervent prayer to Heaven for blessings on her preserver.

The earl quitted the room in search of Edward: he found him still in his wet clothes, surrounded by the whole party from Roseville Park, who were overwhelming him with praises.

Pride did not yield her victim without a struggle; but the father at length triumphed over the peer. "Mr. Montagu," said the earl, breaking in upon them, "Mr. Montagu, we meet, for the first time, under very singular circumstances and impressions."

"Happy, my lord," said Edward, "will it render the orphan of your bounty, till the day of his death, that Heaven has made him the instrument of averting so great a calamity from his benefactor!"

"Sir, all obligation to me is cancelled from this hour," rejoined the earl:—"I must for ever remain your debtor; but I will at least endeavour to do justice to your noble qualities, which ought certain-

ly to have been better known to me before this occasion had thrust them upon my notice. If, however, I have been slow in the acknowledgement of your merit, I flatter myself that I have the means of atoning for my injustice.—Accept, then, my hand, in token of the thanks of my heart."

A tear was the only reply that Edward, thus overpowered with unexpected condescension and kindness, could make to his benefactor.

One of the carriages being prepared for lady Emily, the party now returned to the Park, whither Edward was requested to follow them, as soon as he had thrown off the dripping symbols of his courage and humanity.

The effects of her accident, though of no dangerous complexion, confined lady Emily to her chamber for the rest of the day; and the female part of the company were her voluntary prisoners.

Edward was thus left entirely to the scrutiny and observation of the gentlemen. Lord Roseville studied for opportunities of evincing his kindness: he overwhelmed his new favourite with expressions of gratitude and admiration: he seemed absolutely delighted with a new object on which to display his ostentation; and, besides complimenting Edward on his talents, declared that his want of fortune should be no obstacle to his success in the army, at the bar, or in the church,—the choice of which he yielded unreservedly to himself.

Nothing could exceed the illiberal spleen of lord Barton at this unexpected kindness of his father towards the foundling: while, on the other hand, the

marquis of Arberry, whose misfortune it was to have been the author of the accident, by first carelessly dropping the reins, and then leaping from the phaëton to recover them, seemed to feel, equally with the earl himself, the value of the noble act which Edward had performed.

To the spirit of politeness, therefore, which always shone conspicuously in the marquis, was now superadded an ardent desire of showing his gratitude to the preserver of his destined bride; and Edward found in him an excellent antidote for the supercilious conceit of lord Barton. That profound learning and that knowledge of mankind, for which Dr. Hoare was universally admired, were, at the same time, successfully exerted with a generous design of affording the new favourite an opportunity of displaying talents with which he conceived it would be for his interest that lord Roseville and the marquis should be acquainted.

It was thus that, when he had almost relinquished every hope of being noticed by his patron, Edward was suddenly elevated from the state in which he had hitherto lived, into the splendid sphere of high rank and fashion:—for the earl intimated his resolution that he should, from that hour, consider him an inmate of his own family, until he should finally place him in some situation worthy of his talents, and equal to his merits.

On the following day lady Emily was so much recovered that she determined to meet the family at dinner. She had already been informed of the conduct of lord Roseville towards her preserver,

and was consequently aware that he now made one of the party at the Park. She had listened with interest to the exaggerated description which both Selina and Paulina gave of his person; the one expatiating upon the expression and beauty of his countenance, and the other declaiming upon the elegant symmetry and manly grace of his figure, as surpassing every thing which they had imagined of a mortal. Had lady Emily now for the first time heard the name of Edward Montagu, the enthusiastic panegyrics which these Italian ladies bestowed upon him were sufficient to have excited an ardent curiosity in a far colder breast. But when she connected with that name the interest which his story first impressed upon her infantile imagination, and the admiration which she in common with all the party felt at the display of his wonderful talents on the day of their arrival at Roseville Park, where, above all, she recognised in him the benevolent being who had hazarded his own life for her preservation; when such a combination of ideas and sensations rushed upon her mind, her desire to behold the extraordinary object which had occasioned them became vehement, almost to disease. To prevent the awkwardness which would attend their meeting for the first time at the dinner-table, it was arranged that lord Roseville should detain Edward in the library, where the countess should conduct lady Emily.

It was now the moment, when, leaning upon the arm of her mother, she descended to the library. Whether it were accident or design, it so happened

that never before did lady Emily in dress or person appear so lovely. Her complexion ever fair was now rendered still more beautiful by the agitation of her mind, which suffused the delicate whiteness of her transparent skin with the rich redness of a new-born rose. Her dress was elegantly simple; her head was unadorned; a white robe floated loosely round her; and, as she moved, an unaffected modesty and a graceful innocence accompanied her steps.

Lord Roseville had started to Edward the subject of the war with Spain, and the probable seizure of the Plata ships; which gave the latter an opportunity of displaying to his patron a knowledge of the law of nations which astonished him.

Edward was in the act of pointing out to his lordship a doubtful passage in Grotius, when the doors of the library were thrown open, and lady Emily, supported by the countess, entered and curtsied. The book fell from the hand of Edward, his feet were fixed to the floor, his eyes on the lovely object that enchanted him; while to her he appeared far more graceful, handsome and intelligent, than the most exaggerated description had induced her to imagine.

"Mr. Montagu," said the earl, "lady Emily Roseville, my daughter, and the countess, her mother, come to offer you their grateful acknowledgments for an act of heroism and humanity, which, while it reflects upon you the highest honour, imposes upon every member of this family the most lasting obligation."

Lady Emily now approached, and in a tremulous tone of voice, scarcely audible, expressed her gratitude to Edward. With rather more firmness, but with no less emotion, he replied, "that he should for ever consider that day the happiest and most glorious of his life, which blessed him with the opportunity of being serviceable to so valuable a member of a family to whom he was indebted for every thing he possessed."

Ere the countess could deliver the thanks which hovered on her lips, the library door again opened and the duke of Delaware and his son appeared.

"Do we intrude, my lord?" said the duke.

"By no means," said the earl: "your grace and that careless charioteer are both interested in the present scene. However, we will waste no more time in words, but unite in considering in what manner we can best reward this young hero. In truth, Arberry, I know not if some thanks are not due to you after all; for, such is the pressure of multiplied concerns upon my time and attention, it is more than probable, that, but for this carelessness of yours, I might never have known the uncommon merit and most extraordinary talents of my young friend here."

Edward bowed; a blush reddened his cheeks; and the eyes of lady Emily, full of interest, rested on his countenance.

"I will not repeat the thanks I have already offered to Mr. Montagu," said the marquis. "He will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe that the recovery of a treasure such as this (taking the hand

of lady Emily), which it will ever be my reproach to have so nearly lost, cannot be deemed by me a common obligation, or be acknowledged in common-place declarations of gratitude; but my actions, I trust, will better illustrate my feelings."

"Indeed—indeed," said Edward, "my share in this happy restoration is altogether over-rated. The gem preserved, I grant, is above all price, unique, inestimable; but the hand that fortunately preserved it did but its duty, and must have done the same thing, in the same circumstances, for the most inferior of his fellow-creatures."

Here another interruption ensued by the entrance of lord Barton and Dr. Hoare, who offered their congratulations to lady Emily; and the conversation became general, till they adjourned to the dining room.

The space of time occupied in this interview between lady Emily and Edward Montagu was short, but it was sufficient to give birth to feelings in the bosoms of both, which till that interview neither had experienced.

The first effect of this new sentiment in lady Emily was a comparison between him for whom she indulged it, and him to whom she was publicly, as it were, betrothed. Till that hour she had beheld the marquis of Arberry with an equable indifference, neither raising him above nor degrading him below any standard of merit which she had formed to herself among mankind. Now she discovered that in person, in talents, in disposition, in every thing, the marquis of Arberry was in her estimation inferior

to Edward Montagu——oh, how inferior! The result of this conclusion, which recurred a hundred times an hour, was a feeling of terror and disgust at the idea of that union, which, till she had seen Edward Montagu, she had contemplated with the tranquil satisfaction resulting from the performance of a duty towards the parents, whom she had ever loved, honoured, and obeyed.

While this transformation in the mind of lady Emily was effecting, the breast of Edward was visited by a change no less powerful in its influence upon his peace. He had seen lady Emily, and all the powers and feelings of his mind bowed captive to the force of love.

Every day, every hour he passed in her society, served to increase the strength of that passion, in combat with which the proudest efforts of man's boasted reason have so often failed.

He had resided some time with the Roseville family, when one evening in a contemplative mood he sauntered after dark into one of the solitary walks at a distance from the house. The moon arose, and he extended his walk, and indulged his ruminations, until by the silvery light he found himself at the edge of a small lake at one extremity of the Roseville domain.

On the other side of the lake stood a little hut, which was occupied by an old man and woman, who had formerly been servants to lord Roseville, and whose only labour now was to lock and unlock a gate of the Park, which opened to a carriage road to the next post town.

Edward had that very day walked round this lake in company with lady Emily; and they had both chatted with old Hudson and his wife. He never dreamt that it was love which led his feet to revisit this spot; for to him it seemed altogether chance, that at nine o'clock at night he found himself contemplating the hut, which at noon they had entered together, and that he was now recollecting the sentences and the words which then had fallen from her tongue.

As he stood silently gazing on this object, an incident took place which excited his surprise. At an hour when he imagined old Hudson was at rest, he saw him come forth from his hut, followed by a man muffled up in a great coat; he saw him unlock the gate; he saw the stranger depart, the gate again closed, and the old man returning, ere the thought darted across his mind, that the person just vanished was in size and appearance the resemblance of his supposed father. With the rapidity of thought he was at the cottage, and terrified almost to distraction with his interrogatories the trembling gate-keeper.

"Patience—patience, sir, and I will tell you all," said the old man; "for it is you that are concerned, and I am sure I meant no harm. You must know then, sir, that soon after dark I heard a tapping at our casement, and when I went out, I found a stranger at the door, who asked which was his way into the road;—and then I found he knowed as well as I. At first I did not much like the looks *of such a* thing; but I soon knew he was no poacher

nor thief by his talk, for he spoke quite like a gentleman."

"'Tis he!—'tis he!—Go—go on, my friend," said Edward.

"Nay, sir, for the matter o'that, I ha'n't much more to say; only that he began talking and asking questions so agreeable, all about my lord and lady, and my young lady, and you, and the old duke, and his son, and such like, that the time passed away main pleasant over a mug of ale, till at last he axed if I would do him a bit of sarvice, which was to deliver a letter to your honour, when you comed next all alone this way of the Park—for he said no one else must know on't. Now I don't like underhand doings—"

"But of course, good Hudson, you could not refuse to do such a simple thing as that," interrupted Edward.

"Why, no—I didn't refuse—because, thinks I, it may be some love business, or that; and there can't be much harm to my lord in a letter: besides, your honour bears such a good name, that I told the old man I would venture upon it. But when we came to the point, he had no letter to deliver; and so, as we had got no such a thing as pen and ink and paper, though I had a bit of wax, he could not write it, you know."

"Was ever any thing so unfortunate?" exclaimed Edward. "But why do I stand trifling here? I will pursue him, and run all hazards of his displeasure, rather than endure this anxious suspense! Which way did he walk?"

"Lord bless your honour! he did not walk; there was a post-chaise waiting for him at the bottom of the lane."

"And did he leave no message for me?"

"Oh yes, to be sure; and if your honour had not been so terrifyingly flurried, I should have given you the message before. Here it be; he wrote it on a bit of paper out of his pocket-book, with a pencil."

"Edward snatched with eagerness a small note, sealed but not directed. His impatience would not brook a moment's delay; he broke the wax, and read these words:

'I go to London; you will of course accompany 'your patron there; and we shall meet in that great 'city when you least expect it. It is more than 'ever probable that you are born to prosperity; but 'be prepared to meet adversity. My eye has been 'constantly upon you; my heart yearns to embrace 'you. A few months more will solve all these mys-'teries. Do not reject the kindnesses of your patron; 'yet do not accept any appointment, nor enter into 'any engagement that may commit you for the fu-'ture. Above all, retain that virtuous integrity, and 'that pure sense of honour, which now adorn you, 'and without which an imperial diadem is a crown 'of thorns.'

Edward kissed the little billet, and deposited it in his bosom. He rewarded the gate-keeper, and, enjoining him to the strictest silence, departed to indulge in freedom the various emotions which this adventure had created.

CHAPTER XI.

AN EXPRESS.

EDWARD MONTAGU was the general favourite at Roseville Park:—his manners, his accomplishments, and his disposition, won the admiration of the whole circle, and excited in almost every heart a partiality for their possessor. Yet, as among the number, one heart felt a warmer glow of admiration, and a stronger partiality than the rest; so, one there was which envy had so steeped in her rank poison, that it repelled all overtures of kindness and regard, and was susceptible alone of a malign and ruthless enmity against this hated object of others' praise and love.

Lady Emily, in her open and warm expressions of thanks to the preserver of her life, betrayed nothing more than that most noble feeling of human nature—gratitude: but when, as day after day unfolded to her observation some new trait of nobleness of heart, or brought to view some new beauty of an elegant mind in this graceful youth,—she, who at first had been so prodigal of thanks and praise, closed with reserve her lips, and grew cautious in the very expression of her eyes, at those proofs of excellence and worth which made others clamorous in their applause,—then was it that the

penetration of a judicious and excellent mother discovered the important change in the heart of her daughter, and felt the conviction that gratitude was growing into love.

The countess trembled at this discovery: yet scarcely greater was the pain of her benignant mind on this account, than on that which was the effect of a very opposite cause; since, to her discerning eye the increasing hatred of her son towards Edward was as visible as her daughter's love.

To act judiciously and benevolently under the influence of such circumstances as these, was no mean trial of her heart and understanding. Had lady Roseville been blessed with a friend and counsellor in a husband, her task would have been greatly lightened by acting in concert with his views and wishes; but, unfortunately, the earl was not that friend. He willed, and she obeyed; and though the understanding of the wife was as much superior to that of the husband, as the benevolence of her heart was opposite to the selfishness of his, yet pride, his predominant failing, so blinded the dupe, that he disdained all counsel; nay, so strangely infatuated was his mind, that, did lady Roseville propose perchance the very measures which he had previously resolved to pursue, he invariably took an opposite course, from the mere instinct of perverseness.

To have hinted therefore to this lord and master her opinion, would have been merely to challenge his contempt.—To unfold her apprehensions to lady *Emily* herself, and to warn her of the danger of her

situation, she felt would be attended with this hazard,—that it might open to her mind a possibility, which at present the great disparity between the rank and fortune of Edward and herself made appear impossible; and it would also carry with it a tacit avowal that the intended union with the marquis of Arberry was as yet not indissoluble. Yet, not to check the growth of her mind's disease, she felt was criminal. What though the powerful passion was but in its birth, she knew the nature of that passion, and the constitution of the human heart, too well to hope for its decay, while daily nourished by the presence of its object: and she already saw and dreaded, in perspective, the fatal effects of its indulgence. These apprehensions were not awakened by any doubts of the propriety of her daughter's future conduct, whose established principles forbade such fears; but they were the offspring of her own experience, which taught her, that silent sorrow and untold regrets would be the portion of her life, however much the force of virtue might combat and resist the impressions of the heart, if, with a rooted preference for one object, she approached the altar with another.

While these thoughts and feelings induced in the mind of the countess a strong wish for the immediate removal of Edward, her benevolence was hourly shocked at the means by which lord Barton evidently discovered the very same desire. His spleen at the intrusion of this "Nobody" into the very bosom of his family, he could not with all his cunning hide;

though he aimed with no common pains to disguise it from the earl.

Lord Barton saw that Edward was the reigning favourite, the present pet of his father; and he well knew, that to thwart his humour, or to appear to disapprove his conduct, would tend to make him redouble his favours upon the object of his envy. He therefore pretended to approve of his father's magnificent designs for Edward, and trusted to the known fickleness of his lordship's mind, that some new rival would soon supersede the present subject of his ostentation.

It happened, however, that the removal which both mother and son so anxiously desired, though from such different motives, thus suddenly took place:—The Roseville family and their guests were one morning assembled in the breakfast-room, when a splendid equipage whirled by the window, and in a few minutes captain Neville was announced. Edward instantly recollected the voluble gentleman whom he had encountered at Beauchamp Abbey. The captain, with his everlasting smile, was ogling and bowing to every body in the room, and addressing himself in the same breath to lord Roseville, lord Barton, the duke of Delaware, the marquis of Arberry, and all the ladies, without listening to the inquiries which were made as to the cause of his unexpected appearance; when, suddenly perceiving the reflected figure of Edward in a mirror, he turned quickly round, and elevating his eye-glass, started back a pace or two, and then, standing on tiptoe, exclaimed—

"I beg a million pardons for being surprised; but you must expect to be universally stared at, my dear fellow. It's the common penalty inflicted on every hero of a Tale of Wonder!"

"You most incorrigible of all *Eccentrics*," said the marquis; "if it will not absolutely occasion the loss of your reputation, for once be serious, and tell us what mighty errand of Mars or Venus brings you to this part of the world so unexpectedly."

"My dear marquis, don't be uneasy—I see you wish to change the subject—but, upon my honour, you have nothing to fear from me."

"What is the drift of this nonsense, Neville?" said lord Roseville fretfully; "I'm sure Mr. Montagu and you must be perfect strangers to each other."

"You 're out, my lord—you 're out," replied the captain, seating himself with easy assurance at the breakfast-table, and taking up the tea which had been handed to lady Selina, whose timidity prevented her from noticing what she deemed a mistake.

"Why, Neville," said lord Barton, "you have taken lady Selina's tea."

"Pray, don't mention it," said the captain with perfect nonchalance, "it's of no sort of consequence. But, as I was remarking about this Mr. *Monthing-umme* and the tale of wonder—"

"What tale?—what is the meaning of this?" said lord Roseville.—"Pray, Mr. Montagu, are captain Neville and you acquainted?"

"I have had the honour of seeing captain Neville

once before, my lord," said Edward; "I happened to be at the Abbey when the captain——"

"No prosing, my good sir," interrupted Neville. "We met, as you were going to observe, at the repository of the Beauchamp antiquities yonder; but who the deuce could have conjectured, at that time, when you know I quizzed you so deservedly upon your queer conception of a London newspaper;—who could have anticipated, that within the space of a little month you should yourself become the hero of a tale of wonder; and should furnish, in your own happy person, the most delicious treats which have been served up to public appetite since the institution of those delightful oracles of taste and truth! What a lucky lucky dog thou art! Why, there are men of merit, and men of fortune too, in London, who have been for years sighing in vain for notoriety, who have spared no pains, no expense, to obtain it, while you have tumbled from the clouds, as it were, on purpose to prevent all the world from mentioning any other name than your's and lady Emily's through the whole winter."

To no purpose did lord Roseville frown and knit his brow; of no avail were the burning blushes of Edward and lady Emily; the garrulity of the captain was only excelled by his impudence. He proceeded—

"There was colonel Tiverton with his hawks—they did for a day or two—Captain Jefferies with his dog as big as a bull was talked of for a week—York races and a fair jockey led the conversation

rather longer—the black and yellow hosen of two stout varlets actually gained some little notoriety for their mistress:—but these are all ephemera—mere pips of popularity—mere dots of dashing:—but to be the hero of a tale so wonderful, so romantic, so delightfully mysterious——oh, happy happy Montagu!"

"Neville——Neville, there are bounds to human patience.—Have some mercy on us, I beseech you!" said the earl.

"Pardon me, my lord,—but for the soul of me I cannot help envying this young topic. Go where I would, though the town has yet scarcely a single soul in it, I was accosted with——"Pray, captain, who is this Montagu that picked the Roseville out of the water?"——"Dear Neville," says another, "you know the family, tell us, is this young hero so very handsome, so very learned, so very every thing?"——"Can there be any truth in the story," cries a third, "that lady Emily was smitten at first sight with the foundling; and that she was eluding the pursuit of the marquis, and determined to throw herself into the lake, when Mr. Montagu spread out his arms to prevent her, and they both fell in together?"

"Captain Neville," said the countess of Roseville, unable to restrain her indignation, "you bring blushes into my face and pain into my heart."

"How so, dearest lady Roseville?" said the captain. "Of all the world, your ladyship is the last I would pain or offend.——How have I now done either?"

"By bringing to my recollection," said the c
tess, "how often I have encouraged your sca
by laughing at your eccentric levity. What
have now retailed respecting my own child n
me feel how thoughtlessly I have acted in sn
at your tattle, when the laugh has perhaps
purchased by the gain inflicted on the feelin
others."

"Mercy on us!" said the earl, "where ar
wandering! What is there in the rattle of ca
Neville to require such a sentimental remark?
my part, I always enjoy his ingenious invent
The people must be very weak, or very silly,
expect historical paintings from such a well-k
caricaturist!"

The countess, as was her usual practice, sil
submitted to a reproof, which only served t
vate her in the respect of every judicious and
ing hearer.

Not so doctor Hoare.

"I cannot help differing from your lords
said the doctor.

"Then, if you please," replied the earl, "
adjourn the debate to another sitting. Nevil
you want me, you'll find me in the library."

The captain instantly followed his lordship o
the room.

"Notwithstanding the speaker has left the ch
said doctor Hoare, "I cannot help going on
my speech. I agree with lady Roseville, that t
male gossips, these privileged prattlers, often i
more pain by their caricatures, as the earl calls t

than the most venomous propagtaors of downright falsehoods. For, as a caricature excites risibility only by its distortion of something that we have seen and known, so these mental caricaturists only claim attention by building their scandalous or ridiculous tale upon some base of truth and fact, however slender; and are therefore more mischievous than a serious slanderer, inasmuch as an inuendo is less easily refuted than an assertion."

"I coincide most cordially, doctor, in your excellent remarks," said the duke of Delaware, who always spoke in a pompous tone. "The unfortunate accident of the horses taking fright in the marquis of Arberry's phaëton, you see, has reached the town; and this man, who does not blush to be called a captain, can find no better employ, even in a time of danger to his country, than to frisk about a lady's drawing-room, and tell the story in a hundred various shapes, till it at length becomes the distorted caricature you have described it."

"And yet to take serious notice of such tattlers is giving importance to feathers," said the marquis. "What, for instance, will lady Emily say to the story of leaping into the arms of Mr. Montagu?"

Edward's heart beat strong and quick at this question—every eye was turned towards lady Emily; when the door opened, and a servant summoned lord Barton and doctor Hoare to lord Roseville's library.

This interruption relieved both Edward and lady Emily, whose cheeks were alike suffused with blushes. The countess observed their situation with

pain, and endeavoured to divert the attention of the party by saying,

"What can have brought captain Neville into Cumberland again?"

"Perhaps, madam," said the marquis with a smile, "he has heard some great man express a wish to send a message to my lord Roseville, and he has offered his services. You know they tell a story of his travelling more than fifty-six miles without stopping, merely to deliver a glove at Brighton, which had been dropped in Pall-Mall——"

The captain re-entered the room as the marquis was speaking—

"Oh fie—fie, my lord marquis, how can you lend yourself to such scandal?"

"What, jealous, captain!" said lady Emily. "Ah, the vulgar proverb is true, I see, Two of a trade can never agree."

"Don't wonder, lady Emily, if I punish you for that wicked remark," said the captain. "I dare say now, you have no curiosity in the world to know what brings me here?"

"Not a spark."

"No—I dare say not.—Though I shouldn't wonder if a certain event, which every body knows is to take place in the course of the winter, was to be a little hastened in consequence of my journey hither. If, for instance, lord Barton should be, or is, or is about to be appointed successor to a certain person, at a certain court, which may occasion his speedy return to the continent——"

"What do you allude to, captain?" eagerly inquired the countess.

"Nothing, madam—nothing worth knowing. Ladies have no curiosity, you know—not a spark! —not a spark!"

After some time doctor Hoare re-appeared, and, leading the countess into a corner of the room, beckoned Edward to join them apart from the rest of the company.

"You and I, young gentleman," said the doctor, "are new acquaintances,—yet I flatter myself you have seen enough of me to believe me your disinterested friend. Here, however, is one," continued he, bowing to the countess, "who has known me longer, who has honoured me with her confidence from her youth; and she will confirm to you, how much your merit and your situation have interested me in your favour. Had I a fortune, old bachelor as I am, and without a relation that is known to me, I verily believe I should adopt you as my heir. As it is, I can only offer you that, which young men of your age are too apt to consider of no value—my advice. Yet, sir, the fruit of a long and busy life's experience is not to be despised as valueless, and that fruit I offer you, officiously perhaps, but certainly with the conviction of its usefulness."

"I hope," said Edward, "that it is superfluous to say, that my gratitude to lady Roseville would alone make me obedient to the counsels of one who has the honour of her confidence; but suffer me to add, sir, with sincerity, that I am so sensible of the effects of my own inexperience, that, whatever you

may have the goodness to offer me, in the shape of either condemnation or of caution, I shall receive as a testimony of your kind regard."

"I shall act, sir," replied the doctor, "upon the persuasion of your sincerity. To the point then:—Captain Neville, who has a second time travelled here at the request of the dowager lady Beauchamp, respecting the transfer of Beauchamp Abbey to the earl, and to give some further orders about packing up the old family plate and pictures, which are to be sold by auction in London, has brought letters for my lord, from government, which contain the appointment he has been so desirous of obtaining for lord Barton, as *chargé des affaires* under lord —— at Lisbon. The state of the political world at the present moment renders it uncertain whether we shall be able to retain a minister there or not; and the time of lord Barton's departure is consequently uncertain;—it may take place in one month, in six months, or not at all. He is, however, to repair instantly to town; and I, who had, reluctantly I confess, agreed to accompany lord Barton as his secretary, was summoned to attend him. When, however, I consented to accept this appointment, I knew no one person whom my sense of obligation to lord Roseville's family allowed me to recommend as a substitute, or my own age would have prevented me from again undertaking a situation of fatigue. Since I have had the pleasure of Mr. Montagu's acquaintance, that obstacle to the indulgence of my own inclination is completely and satisfactorily removed. I have ventured, without consulting you,

to recommend you, sir, to the earl, as in every respect qualified for the situation; and I now put to the test your assertion of regarding my counsel, by advising, nay, urging, and, if lady Roseville will join me, commanding you to accept the appointment."

"Generous, excellent man!" exclaimed the countess, "I see the nobleness, the wisdom, of your conduct, and my heart approves it more warmly than my tongue is able to applaud it. Nay, I cannot but regard the coincidence of circumstances which has brought about such an arrangement, as an act of Providence in favour of my excellent young friend. It is a situation, and precisely the only situation, adapted to his peculiar circumstances:—for here though we all vie, and justly vie, with each other, in showing every respect to the individual merit of Mr. Montagu, as well as evincing our gratitude to the preserver of our dear child; yet I am sure, doctor, that his own good sense, and his own right feelings, render it unnecessary for us to say one word upon what may be the different conduct of others, to whom his introduction, in his present ambiguous situation, would be painful to himself and to our family. And if a profession were decided on, whether it be the church or the bar,—for the army I am sure would never be his choice,—though I grant that the influence and purse of lord Roseville, added to the weight of his own talents, could not fail to procure him an ultimate independence; yet, how many humiliating scenes must have been passed through in the jostling and elbowing a crowd of noble and wealthy competitors, to whom the mys-

tery of his origin would be a subject of sport, and the dependency of his lot a theme of scorn! Now, on the contrary, introduced as a man of talent and learning at a foreign court, in the most honourable station to which mere merit can in the first instance elevate him, a door is opened to the exercise of his powers; and the first honours of the state, the highest orders of nobility itself, may prove the just reward of talents thus beneficially exerted for the interests of the country: and even in the least successful issue that can follow such an appointment, a competence for life is certain."

Edward listened with silent attention to this speech and the preceding. There was, as lady Roseville expressed it, an adaptation of the offer to his apparent circumstances so striking, that a moment's hesitation on his part could be construed into nothing but madness or perverseness. Yet, while Edward felt the force of this truth, the recent receipt of the little billet of his supposed father made him not only pause, but almost at once refuse it. The idea of quitting England without that interview to which he looked with so much anxiety, he could not for a moment entertain.

"Does any obstacle or objection to this arrangement, which may have escaped us, suggest itself to you?" said the countess, with a look that expressed her surprise at his silence.

"Forgive me, madam," said he. "Nor do you, sir, or either of you, I beg, construe my silence into an insensibility of such uncommon, such unprecedented generosity. If I have hesitated to express

my thanks, believe me, it is not because my heart does not deeply feel the gratitude——"

"We are not talking about thanks, or gratitude," said Dr. Hoare; "we only ask your acceptance of a certain three hundred a-year for life, with the probability of becoming a minister of state. But perhaps you have better prospects of your own, which you do not choose to relinquish for such paltry overtures."

"Oh, sir," said Edward with a sigh, "there is only one possibility that could induce me to waver."

"What is that?" said the doctor.

"Pardon me," said Edward; "it is weakness, I own, to cherish such a thought."

"Name it, and let us judge," rejoined the doctor; while the countess, associating the idea of her daughter's love with the remark of Edward, turned pale with apprehension of his answer.

"It is the hope—the possibility at least—of discovering who were my parents," said Edward.

Lady Roseville revived at his reply; and at that instant the earl entered the room with lord Barton. He immediately approached the group in the corner, and after a few complimentary remarks to Dr. Hoare and Edward, he beckoned his son to join them, and very formally entered upon the subject which had occasioned Edward so much perplexity. His consent to the measure was not even asked by the earl or lord Barton; but the latter displayed an unusual air of respect and attention to his new secretary, and studied so much to appear conde-

scending, that Edward felt already the superiority which his lordship so awkwardly endeavoured to throw off.

This unexpected event occasioned the Roseville family to repair, unfashionably early as it was, to London. The earl and the rest of the party were to stop a few days at the seat of the duke of Delaware in Derbyshire; but Edward and captain Neville were to set off in three days, in the carriage of the latter, to the metropolis.

The suddenness of this arrangement, to which Edward could oppose no avowed objection, allowed him only a short time to take leave of his old friends.

Mrs. Newton, the old housekeeper, had gone to reside with her relations at Durham. Adam Osborn retired to a cottage near Mrs. Enfield's, to whom Edward introduced him, and in whose kind attentions the old domestic found some consolation for the heart-rending grief occasioned by his removal from his old abode.

Having taken a most affectionate and tender farewell of his fond foster-mother and of his sister Eliza, as he called the Enfields, Edward now prepared, with a heavy heart, for his journey to London. The knowledge, however, that the mysterious stranger had repaired there before him, and the hope that his vigilance would soon learn his new destination, and that he would consequently see and advise with him, considerably lessened the regret with which he quitted the scenes of his youth.

CHAPTER XII.

A SURPRISE.

NEVER were two persons imprisoned together in a post-chaise who were so ill adapted to afford each other amusement, as were Edward Montagu and captain Neville. The latter "graced with a sword, but worthier of a fan," was so totally unused to rational converse that, being excluded by Edward's ignorance of the fashionable world from the only topics on which he could expatiate, he became a sullen, yawning, sleeping partner; only occasionally opening his mouth to curse the tardiness of the postillions, who drove at the rate of eight miles an hour or to bewail the badness and the stupid dullness of the roads, though the roads were in most excellent order, and the face of the country through which they travelled smiled with a thousand charms.

Edward, thus compelled to silence, passed the greater part of the journey in a retrospection of his past life and feelings. The rapid and brilliant changes of the last few weeks had left him little or no leisure for contemplation. He had no other employment than to think; and the more he recollected, the more he was amazed. The form and words of his supposed father now with increased force tortured his memory.

Next in point of force and interest, if not equal, to this master-feeling of his soul was that impression which the lovely lady Emily had wrought upon his mind. He experienced a pleasure in recollecting the delight which in infancy she gave him, when her beautiful lips kissed from his hand the tear which sympathy had caused her to shed; and he made it the dangerous occupation of his thoughts to image her in all the various situations in which he had more recently beheld her,—to repeat internally her observations, fraught with wit, taste, and feeling,—to enumerate to himself the arts in which she excelled, and the numerous instances of her generosity and benevolence, which even in so short a space of time had fallen within his knowledge.

It was now the evening of their last day's journey; and Edward's mind was thus occupied, when the captain, suddenly starting from a long silence, exclaimed,

"I wonder what sort of figure the marchioness elect will cut:—now I recollect, she has never been in London since she was a babe. Yes, this positively may be called her first winter in London. Curse me, if she won't be quizzed most horridly, in spite of her mopuses, unless I take her under my wing!"

"Mopuses! and marchioness! and quizzing!" said Edward. "Of whom do you speak?—What marchioness?

"Why, man, thy rustic stupidity is incorrigible—I mean lady Emily Roseville—that is, the marchioness of Arberry that is to be."

A tremor seized the whole frame of Edward. So wonderfully constituted is the human machine, that the same plain truth which he had often heard before, coming at that moment in sudden contact with the thoughts he was indulging, struck him with a violence as powerful as if then for the first moment he had heard it! and his heart felt a pang painful beyond description. He continued silent, and the captain again fell into a state of apathy.

Edward was alarmed at his own sensations.

"What is this?" inquired he of himself. "Why does the recurrence of a former idea, the marriage of lady Emily, create this perturbation? Surely I am in the possession of my reason!—Yet these feelings seem afraid of reason. Good God! what thoughts, what delusions of the heart are these? Edward, beware!—Honour warns thee that thy peace is in danger!—Oh, mischievous dream of what might have been my bliss, why do you thus tantalize a poor dependent? Why, in the candid and unmasked countenance of the loveliest, the most amiable of her sex, do I see that flattering approval which gives birth to the wildest hopes, only to be displaced by the most dire regrets; Ah? thou mysterious mortal, who, holding in thy hand the veil that screens my destiny, yet refusest to withdraw it—if indeed thou art not the instrument of more than infernal malice, quickly appear again, and let me know the secret of my fate! What, if instead of a dependent of lord Roseville, I should be his equal in fortune, and superior to him in birth? What, if *instead of* venerating at a hopeless distance the ob-

The doors were thrown back, the step of the carriage was let down, and the captain was already in the hall, ere Edward could find words to express his astonishment.

He then leaped out of the carriage, and called after him.

"Captain Neville!—Captain Neville!—You will permit one of your servants to show me lord Roseville's."

The captain turned round, came back, and, mistaking the reluctance of Edward to enter, for rustic timidity, placed his arm under his own, and almost by force led him up stairs, exclaiming aloud,

"Help!—Help there, ladies! In pity, your help—or here is a rural swain will faint with bashful fears!"

Fortunately lady Beauchamp had some music that evening; and the concert having already begun, the instruments overpowered the captain's voice.

"No—no—no!" said Edward; "you misconceive me, captain Neville—I dislike the—that is, you know the Beauchamps are——"

"Very good sort of folks, I assure you. So no more ridiculous scruples. Why, what the devil would you do by yourself at lord Roseville's? Come along, man—This is your home till lord Barton arrives."

Then, turning to a servant on the landing-place,

"Announce captain Neville and Mr. Montagu."

Captain Neville and Mr. Montagu was echoed as *they* ascended, and again as the doors of a superb

apartment were thrown open, and discovered a small but brilliant assembly.

"Montagu!—Montagu!—Which is he! which is he?" was buzzed round the room, as the captain conducted Edward to the mistress of the house, who stood reclining her elbow on a harp at the upper end of the apartment.

Lady Beauchamp, formerly signora Belloni, was now in her fortieth year. She was still extremely beautiful, though her face had lost some of those dazzling charms which first captivated the father of sir Everard. Her person was considerably above the middle stature, of a majestic and commanding form, perfectly in unison with which were the grace of her attitudes and the dignified expression of her countenance. Her eyes, which were large, were black, and her forehead was shaded by luxuriant locks of the same coloured hair; her nose was aquiline, and her lips full. The general effect of her whole appearance was an irresistible impression of her great mental superiority; and the beholder could not resist the feeling of admiration which her presence inspired.

She received Edward with marked respect, inquired after the health of the Rosevilles with great seeming kindness; and complimented him in the most delicate strain upon the gallantry he had displayed in the rescue of lady Emily.

The entrance of the travellers, and apologies for their dress, having occasioned a short interruption to the concert, a tall thin figure now approached the

hostess, who introduced him to Edward as her uncle, under the name of signor Belloni.

The signor was apparently not more than ten years older than his niece; his face was a long oval, of a very sallow complexion, and was strongly marked with the characters of profound hypocrisy.

"London should be congratulated," said Belloni, addressing Edward, "on the possession of a prodigy to-day."

Edward was at a loss how to answer this address, which seemed to imply that the signor knew his history—a circumstance which amazed him. He bowed in silence.

Lady Beauchamp marked his surprise; and letting fall the train of her robe, which had been gracefully folded with a studied elegance over her arm as he entered, she held out to him her hand, and with a look of captivating tenderness said,

"Come, sir, you must be conscious that a story at once so marvellous and mysterious as is yours, must become public. But had it been otherwise, your superior accomplishments would not have remained unknown to my uncle, in whose correspondence with the signor Palmoretti, Mr. Montagu has made no inconsiderable figure. Let me therefore have the happiness of uniting the hands of two persons in a friendship that I am sure will be attended with the best effects to both."

Edward was still more than ever astonished. She thus continued—

"For my own part, Mr. Montagu, you were

master of my affections from the moment I was informed of your attachment to the venerable symbols of the antiquity of my poor Everard's family. The sentiments which you delivered on these subjects are so perfectly in unison with my own, that my heart was penetrated with them, and my memory will ever retain them. Your kind attentions to the old domestic too; your noble defence of him against the rude ridicule of yonder captain, who had the ingenuity to tell his own disgrace; in short, all that I have heard of Mr. Montagu has served to increase my admiration of his conduct, and to excite my wish to behold him. The favour which Neville has thus bestowed on me in bringing you to Portman Square so early, will be his redemption for many offences."

"I will only add, sir," said Belloni, "to what my niece has said, that if, peradventure, the counsel or opinions of a man long conversant with society, as it exists in most of the European states, may prove of the slightest service to one so much younger in the ways of men, and he will condescend to receive such as I can offer, I shall feel a very great pleasure in the friendly interchange of thoughts with a young gentleman of so much intellectual worth, as I have the best authority for believing Mr. Montagu to be."

"I shall be proud, sir, of your friendly notice," said Edward: "novice, indeed, as I am, I shall, I fear, no less need the exercise of your patience and indulgence than of your judgment. But," continued he, turning to lady Beauchamp, "grateful as I am,

madam, for these unexpected marks of kindness, I cannot resist the impulse of surprise, which prompts me to inquire how it is that I hear from your ladyship such sentiments respecting Beauchamp Abbey and the worthy Adam Osborn, while, at the same time, I understand that the one is to be brought to public sale, and the other has been rudely discarded."

Lady Beauchamp blushed, and could not hide her confusion. Recovering her ease quickly, she observed—

"That the old steward has been discarded is true; —that he should have been rudely dismissed is a contradiction to our orders, which shall be inquired into. Respecting the Abbey—there are some particulars which I am desirous, for many reasons, you should know.—Uncle, will you——"

Belloni bowed assent, and, taking the arm of Edward, drew him to a corner of the room; while the lady of the mansion, with a recollection of her situation, turned towards the company, and, with grace apologized for the interruption of the concert, which was resumed with a full piece of Hydn's.

Apart from the observation of the company, a conversation took place between Edward and Belloni.

"Observe, sir," said the latter, "that melancholy figure leaning on the piano;—that is sir Everard Beauchamp. Enveloped in an impenetrable reserve, scarcely any thing beyond a monosyllable escapes his lips, and it is as easy to measure space as to *probe his* thoughts or wishes. With an unaccount-

able indifference to every thing around him, the young stoic seems to have neither the passions nor affections of humanity: the pleasures of Paris and of London, to all appearance, impress him no more than they do the figure that supports these candles."

"This must be disease," said Edward.

"It is a symptom of disease, beyond all doubt; but we have in vain explored the cause."

"How long has he been thus?"

"From his boyish days: it first became remarkable when he was about twelve years old—the period when youth begins to enter on the joyful scenes of life, and frolic in the fairy fields of hope; 'twas at that age he first showed these symptoms of a deep and settled melancholy."

"It is a melancholy—not a sullen spirit, then, poor youth!"

"Sometimes the one, sometimes the other: for instance, in this affair of the Abbey, 'tis sheer perverseness. He trembles at the mention of visiting the seat of his ancestors; yet, when a reason of his terror is demanded, he is sullenness itself. When his opinion as to breaking up the establishment, and selling his life interest in the estate, was asked, his countenance gleamed with the only smile of joy I ever saw there, and he exclaimed—"O, yes, yes, yes; that will make me happy!" And since we have determined to do so, I think his general demeanour has been rather more cheerful."

"'Tis strange, 'tis very strange!" said Edward in an under tone of voice, with a look of surprise.

"'Tis lamentable," said Belloni with an air of pity. "If the means we are now adopting," continued he, "do not succeed in rousing his mind from this state, the alternative must be an application, according to your laws, to obtain authority for continuing his person and estates under the guardianship of his mother. These means are the diversions and amusements which London affords: we intend to try the effects of a residence here for the ensuing winter, and in such an undertaking lady Beauchamp and myself anxiously solicit the aid of every friend to the family."

Edward bowed in silence: his eyes naturally directed themselves upon this new object of his pity and surprise, sir Everard. The young man stood with his arms folded in a posture of deep meditation; his eyes with an unmeaning steadiness, were fixed upon a chandelier suspended from the cieling of the apartment, and he seemed perfectly insensible to every thing around him.

When the music ceased, he started as from a reverie, and his mother, who was constantly at his elbow, led him towards Edward and introduced him. His countenance was an interesting picture of melancholy; but it was rather the melancholy of heartfelt grief than of a disordered imagination. His complexion was a pale olive; he was tall and thin; and the negligence of his dress and person evinced how little his mind regarded the impression of his appearance upon others.

"Sir Everard Beauchamp," said his mother, "will *not take* much pains to win your esteem, Mr. Mon-

tagu; but your judgment will not be slow in discovering how much he merits it."

Sir Everard was silent; but the smile of contempt, accompanied with an expressive glance of his eye, plainly said, "What hypocrisy!"

"Come, come, my Everard," continued she, "shake off this gloom. Here is a gentleman of your own age, in every respect worthy of your friendship, and who is desirous of rendering you service."

"Nonsense! nonsense?" said sir Everard. "Why am I to be thus perpetually tormented? What is it that you would have more of me?"

"How strangely you talk, my son!" said lady Beauchamp with a frown.

"How strangely you act, my mother!" replied he with a sigh. "Let me retire—I am drowsy—My head aches with the noise of these fiddles."

"You are not partial to instrumental music then, I presume, sir?" said Edward, with a view to challenge his attention.

"You are at liberty to presume just what you please, sir," said the baronet. "Come, let me retire —my—my—mother."

Edward was not to be so easily repulsed; he attributed to disease, and not to rudeness, this reply, and would have rejoined; but in an instant sir Everard quitted the room, followed by Belloni, while lady Beauchamp detained Edward in conversation, till she was summoned by the conductor of the concert, who was a professional artist, to take the part allotted her in the performances of the evening. She

immediately placed her new guest in a situation where he could not fail to observe the charms of her person, as she displayed them in unison with those of her voice and musical science, in an Italian air, accompanied by herself on the harp. The strain was amorous, and the masterly execution of her finger was only equalled by the enchanting melody of her vocal tones; while the effects of both were excelled by the expression of her syren smiles and gestures.

Edward for a moment was entranced.

The whole company were clamorous in the indication of their applause; and cries of "Bravo!" "Bravissimo!" overpowered the more rustic exclamations of "Good Heaven!" "Wonderful!" and "Delightful!" which burst from the lips of Edward. For the moment, his father, lady Emily, sir Everard, all the world, and every creature was forgotten, save the Circe of the scene before him. After the conclusion of the air, Edward remained enchanted; his wondering ears still echoed the sweet notes; his wondering eyes still gazed upon the bewitching fair one, as with a studied air of dignity she rose from the crimson velvet stool on which she had been seated.

The concert was now over, and the party began to retire. From a dream so new, so intoxicating, Edward was aroused by a smart blow on the shoulders; and turning round, he beheld captain Neville leaning on the arm of a gentleman, and smothering a loud laugh with both his hands.

"Why, my young friend," said Neville, "what will become of your veneration for old daddy what's-his-name, at the Abbey; and all the old quizzes in tapestry or canvass, if you suffer yourself to be charmed with the pleasures of this wicked town at the very first moment of entering it?"

Ere Edward could rally sufficient courage to answer this abrupt attack, lady Beauchamp joined them.

"Half a dozen people sup with me, Neville," said she: "you and Mr. Montagu will honour me of course?"

"I must beg my excuse for this evening," said Neville; "martyrdom to honour it will be; but I am under a positive promise to give Ellison here his revenge for some strokes of good fortune last week, and must therefore tear myself away. But I have sent one of my fellows to Grosvenor Square, to let Roseville's people know that Mr. Montagu is arrived, and makes this place his home; of course, he, a happy dog, will mingle with the enviable set at your ladyship's *petit souper*."

Lady Beauchamp now took the hand of Edward, and led him through two or three rooms to an elegant saloon, where a repast consisting of all the delicacies of the season was spread; and where, instead of half a dozen, at least a score of persons of both sexes were already assembled.

Though the experience of Edward could not afford him much information of the state of manners among the great, he had nevertheless both heard and seen enough of the fashionable world not to expect

those starch formalities, and that ceremonious behaviour among the present race of fashionables, which distinguished the polite from the vulgar a century ago. Ease and freedom, he was aware, were the fundamental principles of the present code of fashionable legislation; but, even with this previous knowledge, he was not prepared to witness such ease, or listen to such freedom, as characterized this supper, without betraying a bashful astonishment, that formed no small part of the evening's entertainment to his more accomplished but less refined companions.

In fact the party, of which Edward now made one, consisted, not of the most respectable persons in high life, but of some ladies of distinction whose purses were occasionally recruited at the card-tables of the hostess; of others, who not having married till after their children were of age, could not easily gain admission into better company; of men of wit without fortune, and men of fortune without wit.—Here the glass circulated as freely as the jest, and delicacy seemed a restraint that was laid aside for the evening.

Such was the situation of Edward, when the servant of captain Neville, who had been sent to Grosvenor square, entered the saloon, and delivered to him a letter.

"For me!" exclaimed he. "Impossible!"

"Yes, sir, it is for you; and the gentleman who wrote it desired I wouldn't give it to any body but *yourself.* He was waiting to see you."

"It must be a mistake.—I do not know a single creature in London; and yet the superscription warrants my unclosing it.—Have I permission?"

"Oh, by all means," said lady Beauchamp.—"Some damsel in disguise, perchance, has followed you from your rural haunts, and now impatiently waits to throw herself at your victorious feet. For shame, sir, don't delay."

Edward bowed, broke the wax, and read the

LETTER.

'The Being from whom you so reluctantly tore 'yourself away, near the woodman's hovel, has 'sought you at the splendid mansion of your pa-'tron; has waited with a palpitating heart for your 'arrival; and now with sorrow hears that the 'charms of a syren, or the arts of a monk, detain you 'their prisoner. Beware! You are in danger!—I 'watch you.—Continue worthy of my love, and 'when you least expect me you shall see me!—'Farewell. Beware the syren Beauchamp—beware 'the monk Belloni.'

As he read these few words, the paper which contained them trembled in his hands. His senses, which the moment before were rising into a state of riot, were instantly sobered. He became pale, a faintness seized him, and he suddenly left the apartment.

Belloni insisted upon conducting him to his chamber; and Edward, evading as much as possible the

discovery of the true cause of his emotion, begged him to apologize for his abrupt retiring on the plea of sudden illness, arising from the effects of his journey; and not in the least degree connected with the contents of the letter, which was merely on business relating to lord Roseville.

With this excuse Belloni returned to the saloon, though his penetration prevented him from believing it to be true; and Edward, left to himself, again and again read over the words "Beware Belloni?"

"Why, what have I to fear from Belloni?" thought Edward: "What is Belloni to me? or what can such an one as I am be to the signor Belloni? Monk!—how is that again?—How can he call the signor Belloni "the monk Belloni?" What mystery hangs over this unknown, this interesting stranger! He seems to possess supernatural powers.—How else should he thus know every step I take? If he be indeed the author of my existence, why does he assume this veil?—why does he delay the transport of our mutual embrace? Such cold caution makes me almost doubt.—Oh, could a father for an hour delay to call me his before the assembled world! He pleads his danger and my interest.—Heaven is my judge, that no self-danger could deter, no future interest could seduce me from his arms:—how then can he thus avoid me? Yet it would be worse than death to part with the sweet hope that he is my father!—Oh, no! no!—till the last lingering drop of life shall quit my heart, let me enjoy the dream, e'en though it be nothing but a *dream!*"

Such was the train of thought into which the mind of Edward sunk, after Belloni had retired. About half an hour had elapsed when he was startled from these meditations by a very gentle tap at the chamber door—so gentle, that he distrusted at the first his sense of hearing, until the knocking was again repeated.

Opening the door, he started back with surprise, and something like terror, at the appearance of sir Everard Beauchamp, in his night-gown, barefooted, with his long black hair hanging loosely over his shoulders. The forefinger of his left hand was placed upon his lips, and his right hand was raised as a caution of silence. His eyes were cast wildly fearful behind him, as he crept softly on the carpet of Edward's room, and gently closed the door: then turning to him with a look of sorrow that pierced his heart, he placed both his hands upon the shoulders of Edward, heaved a deep sigh, and tears rolled down his cheeks.

Edward prevented from speaking by his gestures, remained silent, with a degree of horror awaiting the issue of the scene.

"You are humane," at length, in a tender whispering tone, said sir Everard.

"I trust so," said Edward.

"I am miserable!—most miserable!"

"Can I serve you, sir?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Hush!—hush!—The keeper sleeps—if he wake

—oh God!" striking his forehead—"if I am discovered—stripes, ignominious stripes—Hush! I must be brief—I spoke harshly to you to-night—Forgive me—'Twas a trick—Mark me—I would have them think I hate you; for, should they suspect a dog of being kind to me, or of being beloved by me, they would—hush!—they would poison it!"

"Almighty powers!" said Edward. "For Heaven's sake, sir, say how I can do you service?"

"Hush!—We must contrive it. I am never left alone with any human creature—but I'll contrive it. Only assure me that they shall not make you hate me—that they shall not persuade you to believe me—mad;—at least do not think I am so yet—what they may make me—I shudder to—But be careful—don't betray me by any signs of pity or regard—be careful, and you may prove my saviour. Don't speak—Hush!—Good night—good night!"

Edward, without speaking, implied his heart's wishes and intentions by gestures; and followed the unhappy youth to his chamber, where he listened a moment or two, and had the satisfaction to observe all was silent.

Late, however, as was the hour, the rude mirth of the party below ascended in a horrid contrast with the scene he had just witnessed; and as he again closed the door of his own apartment, he exclaimed to himself,

"Can I be in London? Surely such things cannot be in London! I am dreaming of events more likely to happen in some lone castle on the snow-

covered Alps, than in a mansion in the very heart of the British metropolis !"

What Edward however had seen and heard was not delusion; and he was compelled to admit, that the uncommon is nevertheless the possible.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PARAGRAPH.

EDWARD's first waking thoughts were of the mysterious letter and the no less mysterious visit which he had received on the preceding evening. Combining the caution contained in the former with the impressions which the latter had occasioned, he could not, with all the charity of his liberal nature, resist the conviction that in the character of Belloni there must be something wrong: and if so—could Belloni's niece be innocent? Into what society, then, had captain Neville introduced him? He recollected, at the same time, all the insinuations of his old friend Adam, relative to the foreign connexions of sir Everard Beauchamp and his parents; and the result of these reflections was a determination to take leave that morning of the family in Portman Square and to fix himself at lord Roseville's.

With this intention he descended to the breakfast-room. The only person yet there was a servant in livery, who was lolling on the sofa and reading a newspaper: he started from his reposing position as Edward entered the room, and began to apply a napkin which he held in his hand to the backs of the chairs which were set round the table. At the same

time, in a sort of half-address to Edward, he observed,

"I am sure it was spelt right—I beg pardon, sir, but don't you spell your name without the *e*? It 's monstrous provoking; but they 're always making such monstrous shocking blunders."

Edward, who had walked to the window without noticing this gentleman of the shoulder-knot, turned round with some surprise, and would have inquired the meaning of the question; but Jasper prevented him.

"Hope no offence, sir; my name is Jasper, sir; —perhaps the captain has mentioned Jasper to you, sir?"

"No, indeed, Jasper," said Edward; "this is the first time I——"

"All in good time, sir; hope no offence; shall always be happy to serve you, sir, or any of the captain's friends. I don't wish to brag, sir, but I have a little interest in that way to be sure; and I must say the captain 's monstrous generous for it. Oh lord, sir, in that *pic-nic* business I was his right-hand; I fought him through the business; and, though I say it, not another soul living besides Jasper Whiff could have got that there paragraph in so late as it was last night."

Here Jasper presented Edward with the newspaper, and pointed to the following paragraph:

'Yesterday evening arrived at the dowager lady 'Beauchamp's, in Portman Square, from the seat of 'the earl of Roseville, in Cumberland, captain Ne-'ville and Mr. Montague, the gentleman who so ni-

'raculously preserved the life of lady Emily Rose-
'ville at such an imminent risk of his own. The ex-
'traordinary story of Mr. Montague is already
'before the public, and we have the most undoubted
'authority for saying, that his figure and accomplish-
'ments far exceed all the reports which had reach-
'ed the metropolis before him. It is understood
'that lord Roseville has already settled on him an
'annuity fully adequate to the high and fashionable
'sphere into which he has been introduced, and of
'which he promises to become so great and envia-
'ble an ornament."

Edward read the paragraph, and looked at Jasper; and "read and looked—and looked and read again." His astonishment and his anger were predominant by turns; but he gave vent to neither by words. He turned the paper over and over again: he read the title and the date; still he could not believe in that which his eyes convinced him to be true. At length, in a tone of angry surprise, he exclaimed—

"Is it possible!"

Jasper, who was not a little terrified at the dumb expression of Edward's countenance, was rejoiced to hear him speak, and now vainly imagining that it was joyful wonder that had so affected him, exclaimed—

"Why, sir, to Jasper it was possible, you see; but if I had not been monstrous industrious, and monstrous lucky into the bargain, we should have been flung; for the moment the captain had finished it, off I flew to the Strand, and who should I

meet at the door but little Grubby, as we call him, the compositor!—'You 're too late, Jasper,—(for they all know me, sir),—you 're too late,' says he; 'all 's composed, and the devils are gone to call up the pressmen.' You see, your honour, I know the nature of these things, having once been a devil myself. So I shows him a shiner, and with a bribe of bread and cheese and beer, to the office, I succeeded with the overseer; and by taking out a couple of sudden deaths, a fire in Oxford-market, a lottery puff, and the text of the sermon preached at St. James's, we made room for the paragraph; but I don't think another man in all London could have done the thing at any price."

"And if you had been tumbled to the bottom of Vesuvius ere you had done this I should not have known the shame and vexation of this moment," cried Edward. "What will lord Roseville's family think? What indignation, what contempt must they all feel for me when this accursed foolery reaches their sight!—Man! man! you know not the extent of the evil you have done me!"

Jasper gaped—Jasper trembled, and in all probability would have fainted with fright and astonishment, had not the appearance of Dr. Hoare, who was abruptly introduced, enabled him to make a precipitate retreat.

"You are naturally surprised to see me in London," said the doctor to Edward, "when you supposed me in Derbyshire: you must, however, expect a hundred such surprises from the capriciousness of *your patron*. Scarcely was captain Neville's

carriage out of sight, when the earl resolved that i was absolutely expedient that lord Barton shoul visit instantly three or four of the cabinet ministe in town, and that therefore his lordship and myse must that hour depart for the metropolis. W reached Grovesnor-square about two hours afte midnight. I was sorry to learn you had taken u your residence with this family, and have hurrie here without my breakfast to take you away. Bu pray, what has ruffled your temper so early? Yo were scolding when I entered the room."

Edward, with real concern in his countenance, re lated the cause of his vexation, and pointed out th paragraph to the doctor; who, smiling at his sim plicity, attempted to convince him that lord Rose ville and his family were too well aware of the na ture of a London newspaper to pay any serious at tention to such a paragraph; and that, even if the should notice it, it would be an easy task to explai the officiousness of Neville.

"Why should the captain do this?—what end it to answer?—is it merely the love of mischief? said Edward.

"No, no, my young philosopher," said the do tor: "you will soon discover the clue to these my teries of fashion: it is not love of mischief, but lo of notoriety."

"I do not comprehend," said Edward.

Dr. Hoare smiled again.

"You don't appear to be thoroughly acquaint with your friend Neville's character," said he.

"*My* friend, sir! I never saw him till by acc

dent we met at Beauchamp Abbey. Why he came there I know not; the cause of his visit at Roseville Park I am as little acquainted with, and in fact, his attention to me is altogether a mystery."

"I perceive it is," said the doctor, with another expressive smile. "Do you know what fortune he has?"

"No."

"Do you know how he contrives to sport such a splendid appearance?"

"No."

"If you did, you would not be surprised at what you have just read with so much emotion: the honourable captain Neville, sir, lives upon paragraphs."

"Lives upon paragraphs!"

"Yes; and that very paragraph, for instance, which has given you so much uneasiness, will, in all probability, furnish his ways and means for the winter!"

"Explain; pray, explain."

"Listen then:—in this metropolis, Mr. Montagu, you will soon discover, to use the words of one of our most elegant poets, that 'Fashion in every thing bears sovereign sway:' in arts, in science, in manners, in morals, nay, even in religion, fashion is in all and over all supreme! Thus, sir, you shall see men not only without moral or religious principles, but destitute of common knowledge, and devoid of common honesty, who are countenanced by the great and noble of their own sex, and courted, followed, and flattered by the most lovely and ac-

complished females of the nation. Ask, why is this so? and you will be told by this duke or duchess, that such and such another duke or duchess receives the man; that he makes himself irresistibly agreeable; that he knows every body, and every body knows him; that such men are necessary appendages to people of fashion; and, in short, a party is not deemed complete without a Neville or a Shuffleton: they don't know how it is, but it is the fashion.—The passport, sir, to the tables of princes, to the drawing-rooms of nobility and gentry, is fashion, which is synonymous with notoriety, and notoriety is to be purchased through the medium of a venal press. This art no man better understands than captain Neville, nor is there in the whole fashionable world an individual who converts his knowledge to more advantage."

"He appears to belong to a species of which till this moment I was a stranger," cried Edward.

"His history is short, and it may be useful to you to know it," continued Dr. Hoare. "His father was a Yorkshire squire, who broke his neck in a fox chase, and left his son very little more than the price of a pair of colours in the Guards. By his talents of mimicry and rhyming, Neville rendered himself agreeable to a circle of young men of rank, who had been his school-fellows at Eton, and partly by their interest, and partly by their money, which he perhaps could not help winning, he gradually rose to the rank of captain; and, though on the prospect of a war he obtained leave to sell his commission, he is *still* captain Neville. Accident threw him in the

way of a lady of fashion, who had written a play, to which Neville tagged an epilogue, that became extremely popular. His fortune was established from that moment. He dressed in the most eccentric manner possible, that he might attract public notice; and when it was inquired, "Who is he?" the answer was, "The author of the celebrated Epilogue."—Among others to whom this vast fame introduced him was the proprietor of a newspaper, then recently established, and particularly addressed to the fashionable world. Neville, and a few other minor poets, wrote sonnets to themselves, and answered themselves in sonnets again, which were printed in this newspaper, and which it became fashionable to read, or rather spout, in the first circles. The newspaper-man was of course gratified by the profits of his increased sale, and Neville, in return, had the privilege of puffing and praising himself and his friends, and of sneering at and scandalizing his rivals and foes. From nonsensical verses the rage turned to a jargon of prose paragraphs, which had the novelty of being constructed of most unintelligible words and sentences: they became, however, universally read, and were at first smiled at for their quaintness, then tolerated for their absurdity, and now must be for ever execrated as the foundation of an abuse of the liberty of the English press; which renders it doubtful whether ignorance itself be not preferable to intelligence through such prostituted sources!"

"You have opened my eyes, sir," said Edward, "to the perversion of one of the dearest privileges

of an Englishman; but whilst I lament from my soul so great a public evil, I cannot help recurring to my individual case, and asking again, what purpose of captain Neville's can be answered by this paragraph?"

"I'll tell you:—Neville's debts have compelled him to some years absence from England. In that period many powerful rivals have started in the art of *paragraphing*, and the mystery itself has considerably sunk in its credit and its value, by a great increase of professors. The result is, that Neville sees the necessity of seeking new sources, and in you he imagines that he has sprung a mine which, by properly working, he can make far more productive than his paragraphs. I know this to be a fact, but have not leisure at present to detail particulars."

Edward was about to make some inquiries concerning Belloni, when the Italian himself entered the apartment. He was soon followed by lady Beauchamp and her son. As the doctor was known to the family, and as her ladyship pressed his stay with earnestness, politeness compelled him to sit down to the breakfast table.

Their conversation was cold, formal, and uninteresting. Sir Everard threw himself sullenly on a sofa, and, taking up the newspaper, seemed totally unmindful of any one present, except that now and then he stole a pity-asking glance at Edward, who sat opposite to him.

The gloom of the moment was, however, quickly dispelled by the appearance of Neville, in a morning gown, his hair half dressed, a slipper on one

foot, and a Hessian boot upon the other, with three open letters in his hand. As he rushed with a theatrical air into the room, without regarding the presence of doctor Hoare, he exclaimed to Jasper, who followed him—

"O you divine creature! you omnipotent little fellow!" Then addressing himself to lady Beauchamp: "What an immense treasure have I parted with to your ladyship in that indefatigable Mercury! Do pray excuse me, my dear sir Everard, but I am all perturbation to see my *announce*."

As he spoke, he almost snatched the paper from the baronet, who, after a smile of contempt, sunk into the same image of melancholy which Edward had at first beheld him.

Neville, having read the paragraph, exclaimed—

"It 'll do!—It 'll do!—It 'll do!" and danced about the room as if frantic with joy.

"What will do, captain!" said doctor Hoare. "Perhaps when you have done dancing the hays you will condescend to explain?"

Neville pretended surprise at the appearance of the doctor, and begged a million of pardons for being astonished at seeing him in London—

"But, oh my good old doctor, congratulate me," continued he, "for this is the most fortunate moment of my life. My paragraph is still reeking from the press, and yet its magical operation has been successful already. See these trophies of victory," holding up the three letters.

"This is some new *hoax*, as you term it, I suppose, captain:" said lady Beauchamp.

"No, positively, no——all matter of fact——You shall hear—This is from one of the richest and closest dogs on the turf—he has *shied* me lately—Now mark his style—

"Dear Neville,

"I know you took it queer that I did not stand it, when you wanted a replenish last week; but, I swear, I was as low myself as a horse-pond in summer. Luck has looked in upon me since: so, if you are not supplied, you know the rest. Yours,

ASHMORE."

"Thank you kindly, my noble lord Ashmore! Now mark again—This is from the lady of a rich city merchant, who gives more stylish fêtes at the west end of the town than any of our nobility. Hear her."

"Mrs. George Torrington presents compliments to captain Neville, and (perceiving by the newspapers that he is in town) takes the earliest opportunity to explain the cause of her not sending captain Neville a ticket for her last little fête in Portman Place. Mrs. T. understood from a friend that captain Neville and Mr. Robert Torrington had unfortunately had a misunderstanding respecting the subscription concerts last year, and that it would be the most unpleasant thing in the world for captain N. to meet Mr. Robert Torrington; and as it would have excited every body's surprise if Mr. Robert Torrington had been absent from his brother's fête, Mrs. George Torrington was under the

very painful necessity of omitting the name of captain Neville on that occasion. Mrs. George Torrington has since learnt that she was imposed upon by the friend who reported the fracas, and that no such misunderstanding ever took place; and she therefore hopes, as she means to stay in Portman Place till after the holidays, that captain Neville, with his known good nature, will favour her with a call, to receive her sincere vows of penitence and contrition for having been so duped into even the appearance of a slight."

"So much for Mrs. Torrington," continued the captain; "her invention is at least equal to lord Ashmore's impudence! But I discard them both—I cut them for ever. Here is, my idol) pressing the third letter to his lips); yes, this little billet is more valuable than quires of such letters, from such creatures as the Ashmores and the Torringtons. There, young Tyro—read there the greatest acquisition, the proudest triumph of my life."

There was no possibility of soberly replying to the jargon of this eccentric captain, or of stopping him in his career. Edward therefore, with a half smile, took the letter, and, unfolding the envelope, discovering that it was merely a blank cover, containing a card, on which were the words—

"The duchess of Belgrave at home."

"Why, captain," said Edward, holding the card letter between his finger and thumb, "is this a ta-

lisman, that the possession of it is of so much consequence to you?"

"It is—it is a talisman—a charm as magical in my possession as the finger of old Midas! Come, ask no questions: I'll answer all you would ask, and thus save half the time. The duchess of Belgrave, perhaps, you never read of in your old-fashioned country papers; but you will now see the delightful creature's name sparkling in every column of every paper daily. Years have not decreased the magic influence of that name. Nothing can resist its charm; the wisdom of our ablest politicians, the wit of our brightest geniuses, the purses of our wealthiest citizens, are all at her command. But Her Grace shall unfold herself to your rustic gaze, and her glories will strike you the more. It is, however, necessary that I should explain to you, that about four years ago her grace and your humble servant declared war against each other. It's no matter now who was to blame; we had till then been the most confidential allies, we instantly became the most desperate enemies. A few months ago, as doctor Hoare will tell you, we met at Madrid, where the duchess with her family were waiting to join the British ambassador on their return to England. The same opportunity being embraced by lady Beauchamp and her party, of which I was one, and by lord Roseville and his family, we travelled in company through Spain to Portugal, and one packet brought us all over together from Lisbon to Falmouth. The incident of this journey

very opportunely brought lord Roseville acquainted with his neighbours in Cumberland, the Beauchamps, and advanced several steps a reconciliation between the duchess and me. Yet when Roseville and lady Beauchamp here jointly commissioned me to view the old abbey with a professional man, I had not an idea of finding in that old mausoleum the means of a complete triumph over her grace."

"What did you find there?" said Edward.

"You!" replied the captain.

"You talk enigmas," said Edward.

"Time will bring their solution. In the mean while we must prepare you for a visit to the duchess. You must new furnish your wardrobe. I will order the carriage, and drive you to Bond Street; for positively your appearance is too rustic to amble. The earl, you know, placed you under my direction. In this island of Calypso, London, such a Telemachus as you would be lost in an hour, without such a Mentor! I must therefore devote a few hours to you. Come, lady Beauchamp, sir Everard, signor Belloni, doctor, you must all positively be of my party, and therefore prepare."

Edward looked significantly at doctor Hoare, who had listened attentively to the captain, and said with an emphasis.

"Well, sir, what say you? ought I to trust this Mentor?—Is he a counsellor think you, on whom I should rely, or is he one of whom I should 'beware?'"

"My experience of mankind makes me slow in trusting," said the doctor: "but on '*this* occasion,'" continued he, with an accent which Edward understood, "I should advise you to obey him."

"Only guard your heart, Mr. Montagu, against the fascinations that may assail it, and I am sure your judgment is in no danger of erring," said lady Beauchamp.

Edward bowed; and as he looked towards the dowager, his eye caught sir Everard's. No one but Edward saw his countenance; for the captain, and Belloni, and the doctor, stood with their backs to him, and lady Beauchamp sat behind him.

"Will sir Everard," said he, "join our party?"

The baronet smiled, and looked his thanks to Edward, but at the same moment answered in a dissembled tone of contempt,

"Sir Everard feels no such inclination."

"Sir Everard then must bend his inclination to his duty," said lady Beauchamp with an air of haughty anger; "I say he will join us, Mr. Montagu."

Sir Everard made no reply; and shortly after doctor Hoare took his leave, having engaged Edward to dine in Grovesnor Square. Captain Neville and his pupil of fashion then set out on their morning tour. In the space of a few hours Neville had taken Edward to a score of tradesmen. When he stopped at a taylor's in Bond Street, expecting to be measured for a suit of clothes, what was his surprise to learn that Mr. Larolle made only coats; and that they had a dozen doors further to drive

before they reached 'the first hand in the world at waistcoats, braces, and inexpressibles!' The same 'artist' who excelled in fitting a dress shoe, would have been intolerable as the manufacturer of a pair of boots; and though Mr. Flint, the hatter, assured them, that for round walking hats, and hunting hats, there was not a superior shop in London; yet he would confess that for an opera hat Mr. Breach did certainly 'cut all the trade.'

They had arrived near home, when the captain pulled the checkstring suddenly, and exclaimed—

"I had almost forgotten. Here is an optician! You must have a quizzer."

"What is that?" said Edward.

"Oh, an eye-glass."

"I can see extremely well, captain; an eye-glass dangling at my button-hole will be perfectly useless."

"Very true, native—very true—and pray of what use is a hat under your arm? And yet you would look as naked as a Hottentot without it. Don't be so philosophical, my dear fellow; do as the rest of the world do; and leave it to such quizzes as doctor Hoare to investigate why the world do so."

Having finished the important business on which they set out, the captain set Edward down at the earl of Roseville's, where lord Barton and doctor Hoare awaited his arrival.

CHAPTER XIV.

A METAMORPHOSIS.

"PRAY did you see the person who waited here so long for me last night, and then sent a letter by captain Neville's servant?" said Edward, as he entered, to the domestic who attended the hall-door of Roseville House.

"Yes, sir."

"Has he been here this morning?"

"No, sir."

"Did he say that he would call again?"

"No, sir. He did not speak at all when he went away; but he gave a great sigh, and seemed in distress. I take it he wants relief of the family, poor old gentleman; for it seems he has known better days formerly, when he used to visit my lady."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why, sir, when he came and said he must wait to see you, sir, I showed him into that little room to the right; so he staid there a few minutes, when out he bounces in a terrible agitation, and taking hold of my hand (his own was all of a cold sweat) he says, 'I beg your pardon, my good fellow, but I could not remain in that room if my life depended on it. There is a picture hangs in that room, which

so strongly reminds me of the days when I was happy, that I cannot bear to see it!'"

"What picture did he mean?" said Edward.

"There is but one in the room, sir: it is a picture of my lady, as I am told, before she was married."

Edward hurried into the apartment. It was lady Roseville's portrait. The resemblance was sufficiently strong to supersede all doubts; yet there were in the pictured face an angel smile, and a tranquil eye, which time and care had stolen away from the original. Edward gazed upon the picture; he repeated to himself the words of his supposed father—'That picture reminds me of the days when I was happy.' A hundred ideas struggled for the possession of his mind. The enmity of the stranger to lord Roseville, and his esteem for the countess;—his extraordinary behaviour and expressions at his first interview, when told of the demolition of Darlington Hall;—the danger which his father seemed to fear;—the more than benevolent kindness of lady Roseville;—the strange manner in which his first introduction to her family was accounted for:—these and similar suggestions of his memory mingled with his present feelings of surprise at the behaviour of the stranger. He closed the door of the room. He tottered to a chair, still fixing his eye upon the portrait. His heart felt confined in his bosom, and he could not help exclaiming aloud,

"O God, is it not possible I contemplate the face of my mother! Yes!—yes!—I feel as by inspiration,—all *at once I* feel my fate disclosed. I am the

child of love, but not of law!—Hold, hold, my impious fancy.—Lord Roseville's heir, lord Roseville's lovely daughter, are my seniors in age; and I am accusing an angel of ——"

The door opened.

"Alone, Montagu?" said lord Barton; "I thought I heard you talking. Don't let me interrupt your private addresses to my mother, for I see you have no other company. Or perhaps you were practising your maiden speech in parliament, and making an eloquent defence of the whole *corps diplomatique* against the charges of 'the honourable gentlemen on the other side of the house.'"

This sally of his lordship gave Edward time to recover himself from the surprise of the interruption; and he was still further relieved by the appearance of doctor Hoare.

"So!" said the latter, addressing Edward, "we are likely, I find, to have as lazy a life in London as we had at Roseville Park. I suppose lord Barton has told you that there is no prospect of a speedy trip to Lisbon: and that being the case, how will you young men employ yourselves?"

"Oh, we shall find ways and means to kill time, doctor, in this multitude of London," said lord Barton.

"And pray, my lord, at what office have you taken out a license to kill time?" said the doctor.

"Nay, now, my dear sir, no more moralizing. I am at present in excellent spirits, and will keep so, I am determined. The marquis of Hartley and I have been together the whole morning. His mother, the

duchess of Belgrave, is, you know a kind of master-key to all the gay parties in London. He has promised to introduce me to-day to his sisters—nice dashing girls, he says. The duchess has a sort of *Petit Trianon* at Brompton, and he means to drive me there in his barouche. He has got a charming barouche, and four delightful grays. His mother furnishes him with every thing stylish, and he has a most exquisite taste!"

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the doctor, "do I hear lord Barton? Why, my dear lord, but that the customs of the English are changed since the days of Falstaff and prince Hal, I should suppose you had met the young marquis at the Boar's-head, in Eastcheap, and had been scoring up a butt of sack this morning! Why, sir, this is not the proper cue for a secretary of legation."

"A word in your ear," said his lordship: "Do you know, I have quite changed my mind about that business since I met the marquis. He tells me that it's a sort of thing a young fellow of my expectations ought to sneeze at. 'It would be well enough,' says he, 'for a fifteenth or sixteenth son of lord Roseville; but, my dear fellow, it would be murder of the foulest dye for a fellow of your spirit, with such an exchequer as your dad possesses, for you, an only son, to turn engrossing clerk, and copy a parcel of humdrum dispatches."

"And did your lordship listen to this rattling nonsense?"

"'Faith, doctor, it is real good sense, and sound *perfect truth*. Why, he pointed out to me three

of my old schoolfellows at Eton, who were very clever, and cut a splash in the "Microcosm," who have pined and fretted themselves almost into consumptions with diplomacy: but then, you know, they were genuises without a penny of fortune; so it might do for them as well as a worse thing; as it might for Mr. Montagu here. But not a word to my father of this. There'll be no occasion, I am sure, to quarrel with him about it; because lord H—— told me that he did not think his appointment would take place before spring, if it did at all. And so we have got the whole winter before us to manœuvre in."

Edward was dumb with astonishment. Nothing in the Metamorphoses of Ovid struck him as more miraculous than this change in lord Barton. He looked with an expressive surprise at the doctor, and the doctor at him.

A thundering knock at the door was replied to by lord Barton, with,

"Here's Hartley—Good bye—I shall dine out."

From the window Edward and the doctor beheld unobserved this young sprig of fashion. He was about nineteen years old, not very manly in his person, which was thus adorned: a pair of boots wrinkled half down his legs, disclosed his white stockings; inexpressibles of brown kerseymere, buttoned in the front of his knee, rose nearly to his arm-pits; three or four striped waistcoats the size of a lady's pair of stays, were surmounted by a sort of Turkish turban, worn round the neck instead of the head, *which* was concealed by a slouched hat, that nearly

met the corners of the shirt collar which shaded his ears. His outer garment was a jockey frock. Thus disguised, the marquis was seated on the dickey of the barouche, holding four in hand in a masterly style. Two grooms on horseback were at the horses' heads; on the box with the marquis sat a stout man, whom Edward recognised as one of the party at lady Beauchamp's *petit souper;* but the body of the carriage, which in shape resembled a hearse, was empty.

"In the name of wonder," exclaimed Edward, can this be the costume of a young nobleman?"

"Yes, that's the morning dress of a marquis!"

"And who is he on the box with him?"

"Guess!" said the doctor. "Who would you suppose, now, to be the companion of a young nobleman? You perceive he is a man of some notoriety; he attracts the attention of the populace more than the marquis."

"He is, I suppose, some public character then?"

"You are right—He is a very striking character—for he has fought many pitched battles, and has given public lessons on the refined art of boxing.—See, the marquis is introducing the bruiser to the son of an earl. They shake hands: now they dispute politely for the seat of honour: the marquis arranges it: he himself keeps the box, the pugilist descends, and cheek by jowl he and the young lord are driven through the streets by the son of a duke. O for the pen of a Juvenal!"

"I am most of all astonished, sir," said Edward, at the conduct of lord Barton."

The doctor sighed. He placed his hands behind him, and with his head cast down, walked silently about the room. Then seating himself in a chair—

"Well, sir," said he, "and what are you going to do with yourself?"

"I wish you would have the goodness to point out to me, in a situation so new, the most profitable way of disposing of my time, sir, until the earl arrives."

"Is it altogether natural for a youth of one or two-and-twenty to pay such implicit deference to an old fellow of threescore?"

"My habits, sir, may as little merit praise as those on which you have bestowed your censure; but, believe me, I do not affect propensities which I have not, nor have I designedly concealed any that I have."

"And yet, sir, in London, yours will be considered as a made-up character. People who are unacquainted with the extraordinary combination of circumstances that have formed you what you are will certainly set you down for a hypocrite, unless you actually become one, and affect some few fashionable vices which you have not."

"If I understand you then, I must study duplicity to acquire any pretensions to integrity?"

"It is done every day. Half the follies in which the young men of this age, and every age I suppose, indulge, are neither the offspring of their own weakness or vice. The race-course of these animals is marked out for them, and whoever refuses to run it *is esteemed* a fool or a hypocrite; and thus it is that

so many belie their own taste, feelings and opinions, by following the actions of others. Had lord Barton, for instance, continued under the influence of his father's, and the few other examples he has yet seen, he would have copied them with the same servility as he now will others. But I foresaw that in London he would experience the want of any originality of mind, and that, unless he was quickly engaged in some serious pursuit, he could not be kept out of the race I have described. Should the postponement of his employment abroad keep him here but one winter, the result, I doubt not, will be, that lord Barton will become, if not as vicious, at least as frivolous, as any other lord within the vortex of fashion. But I am talking to you as freely as if you had been my sworn secretary, instead of secretary elect to my *quondam* pupil. How is it, sir, that you have thus insinuated yourself into my confidence? I declare I never meant it. You have some how or other stolen into my affections, and, notwithstanding the disparity of our years, I feel more pleasure and less reserve in your society than in that of any man I have ever known since the unfortunate death of a worthy friend who bore the same name as your own, and in honour of whose memory, indeed, lady Roseville has so called you."

"What did you say, sir?" said Edward: "was there ever, then, a real Edward Montagu?"

"Ask the amiable original of that portrait (pointing to lady Roseville's picture) that question, and tears of the most heart-felt tenderness will be her eloquent reply."

"Sir!—sir!—how?—tenderness!—I beg your pardon, sir; I am to blame."

"For what?"

"For daring to indulge thoughts which—I beg your pardon."

"I don't understand you," said Dr. Hoare, surprised in his turn: "your thoughts, whatever they may be, you have not yet expressed; but this is not the first time I have remarked the natural bursts of an ingenuous mind through a reserve that I am sure is painful to you. I have no claim, certainly, upon your confidence, except such as may be due to a sincere wish for your welfare."

"Oh, sir, you pain me by this kindness," interrupted Edward: "pray, think no more of it."

"Of what?"

"Of—Montagu!—I mean—of Lady"—

"How hard it is for a noble spirit to wear disguise! Some idea has arisen in your mind from my mention of lady Roseville in connexion with my old friend Montagu. It is an idea unworthy of your character, I perceive; and, though not uttered by your tongue, the pure spirit that animates every lineament of your face has betrayed it in your own despite."

"Good heavens, sir!—Surely—"

"No more evasion, young man: the thought was involuntary, and perhaps the error was natural. Thus far there is nothing to be ashamed of. I rejoice, indeed, that you have betrayed your mistake, since it enables me to correct it. Most seriously, *most* earnestly, then, let me impress upon you this

important truth—a truth of which I am as positively convinced as that I exist—Believe me, that in lady Roseville you have found the most disinterested benefactress: I blush for you while I feel it necessary most plainly to say, that you have no more affinity with that most pure of mortals than with all the living daughters of Eve."

Edward's face was flushed with shame, and he bent down his head abashed. The doctor saw his pain: without noticing it, however, which he knew would only increase it, he continued, altering his voice from the most grave and impressive to a familiar and indifferent tone—

"The Edward Montagu, of whom I spoke, was more than forty years older than miss Darlington, when that portrait of her was painted. I remember its being brought down to Darlington Hall: it was hung up in the little parlour, I recollect, the very night before Montagu and sir Alfred Beauchamp set off for the continent."

"Sir Alfred Beauchamp!" exclaimed Edward.

"Yes: that noble youth was then under the guardianship of lady Roseville's father. Mr. Montagu was his preceptor, as he had been that of miss Darlington, of her father, and of myself. They took leave of us amidst our tears—prophetic tears!—for we never saw them more. Had the murderer's poniard spared them, your benefactress would have been a Beauchamp, not a Roseville!"

"Dear sir," said Edward, "how much I am obliged by this kindness—this confidence! In all the many conversations I have held with the vene-

rable old steward at Beauchamp Abbey, he has ever evaded this part of the family history."

"I know his motives: his faithful attachment to the family caused him to throw a veil over suspicions that the rest of the world will for ever indulge."

[Here Dr. Hoare related the adventures of the two Beauchamps and Mr. Montagu, at Florence.]

Edward listened with eager attention to the doctor's narrative. Every sentence interested him; but when the name of signora Belloni was repeated, the caution which he had the preceding evening received——'Beware the syren Beauchamp! beware the monk Belloni!'—rung in his ears, and he started with an involuntarily expression of horror and surprise.

"I much fear, sir," said he, "there is something wrong! These Bellonis cannot be innocent. But is it not wonderful, sir, no pains were ever taken to bring to light so foul a deed?"

"That which is every one's affair is no one's," replied the doctor. "In a foreign country, in a city where they had not even an acquaintance but the man they travelled to embrace, who were to interest themselves in behalf of the unhappy baronet and his friend, if a brother did not? The bodies were found, and were interred: the survivor and successor followed the mangled corpses to the grave; and then espoused the Italian woman now styled lady Beauchamp!"

"Did they then visit England?"

"No; they continued to reside at Florence for a considerable time. They then repaired to Paris, where they lived in a style of extravagant dissipation that soon exhausted all that accumulation of property with which the excellent father of lady Roseville had flattered himself to restore the genuine splendour of the house of Beauchamp. He did not live to see the ruin; but in a few years the last guinea that could be raised in England upon the estate was squandered away in Paris. Suddenly sir Everard and his lady vanished from that city, and were heard of no more till the death of the unworthy baronet was announced to have taken place in Switzerland. For some time no claim on the estates of her husband was made by the widow; but at length this signor Belloni, her uncle, who was then for the first time heard of, arrived in London, with an account that the dowager had been left pregnant, and that a son and heir to the late baronet had been born at Basle, and baptized in the Protestant faith by the name of Everard, in honour of his departed sire."

"All is not right in this business," said Edward with earnestness "have you ever conversed with this unhappy youth?"

"Only once or twice: we came over in the same packet; but lady Roseville felt so much horror in the company of the mother, that we avoided them as much as possible."

"I am most warmly interested in this story, sir; I feel, I scarcely know why, a heartfelt veneration for the name of Beauchamp, and am zealous for the

honour of the family. The old Abbey and its venerable domestic were the first objects which impressed my fancy, and they warmed my mind almost to enthusiasm."

"It is a pity," said the doctor, smiling, "that there is not some wronged female orphan of this old Abbey, in whose behalf such a knight-errant might break a lance. But come, we must descend from our romantic flights, and recollect our real characters and situations. I am called Dr. Hoare, an old fellow who has seen the world, and is not unwilling to communicate what he has seen, for the benefit of others; and you are a young man, to whom even London is new. We will, therefore, if you please, take an early dinner, and avail ourselves afterwards of the opportunity of being our own masters to visit one of the theatres in a sober style; a privilege which we shall not be indulged with when our fashionables arrive."

CHAPTER XV.

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

"TO Covent-Garden Theatre," said doctor Hoare to the servant who put up the step of the hackney-coach into which he followed Edward. "Now am I about to enjoy a treat," continued he, "which has long been denied me. It is many years since, in a snug corner of the pit, I was present at the first representation of a new play. It is impossible to convey an idea of the pleasure I experience on such occasions, when the author is not so unfortunate as to meet with damnation, which will not, I trust, be the case to-night; though this time last year I understand he was for the first time unsuccessful in his attempt to amuse."

They were set down in Bow-Street, where a crowd of people were already assembled, waiting for the opening of the doors.

"Will you venture in this crowd, sir?" said Edward.

"Will I?" replied the doctor, buttoning up his coat, and preparing for a squeeze. "Will I?" repeated he, with a species of enthusiasm: "Zounds, man! I have stood at the doors of the theatre three hours, for the sake of seeing a new play, before now; *and have elbowed* my way as well as the stoutest

among them! Come, you have only to stand close, and take care to keep your arms down, and your elbows a little to the right and left of you; and mind, when the doors open, don't go near the wall, but keep in the middle of the stream."

In a few minutes the doors were opened; and the ears of Edward were terrified with the following outcries: "Stand back! Stand back! Take care of your pockets! Don't squeeze so, sir! You 'll kill this lady, sir, she 's fainted! O Lord, my arm 's broke! Sir, you 're no gentleman, to shove so! Ma'am, this gentleman pushes me!"

The novice, in such a scene, was actually alarmed, and could scarcely believe his guide that all this vociferation was excited simply by the impatience of the crowd to obtain admission.

At length, however, they entered the theatre, where all these alarming exclamations were exchanged for smiling faces, with the exception of one or two country young lasses, who bewailed the demolition of various articles of finery; having ignorantly attired themselves in box dresses to scramble into the pit.

The eyes of Edward had now ample employment: they were first directed by his ears to the high regions assigned to that part of the audience called the "gods," namely, the galleries, where a loud confusion of voices of all tones, and in all keys, accompanied by cat-calls and whistles, were calling out, "Jones, where are you? Wilson! Jerry! Jem! *Here!* Come up! Where 's Sal? Here—come *down!*" Doxies were screaming for their sweet-

hearts, and 'prentices roaring for the companions of their toils and pleasures.

Doctor Hoare had taken his old station, on the first row of the pit; and while Edward was gazing at the gods, the doctor was leaning his back against the orchestra, and adjusting the position of his wig after the disorders of the crowd.

"What an uproar they make there!" said Edward.

"Oh, it's quite shocking!" said the fat wife of a tallow-chandler from Bishopsgate-Street, who had been treated to the play by a wine-merchant's clerk, who lodged in her first floor. "It's quite a nuisance to respectable people, as comes to hear a play. I thinks it would be a good thing if there vas n't no galleries at all!"

"'Pon my vurd, ma'am," said her cicisbeo, "that's vat I calls a good highdeer. Such low people might go to Hashley's, and such has that there, you know."

"Do you know, Montagu," said the doctor, as he leaned his arms on his stick, looking towards the galleries, and without seeming to have heard the polite effusions of his neighbours;—"do you know, my heart glows with rapture at witnessing once again the noisy happiness and freedom of my countrymen! On no other spot of the globe that I have travelled is there such a spectacle as that. Visit a foreign theatre, and you will find, I grant, the utmost decorum—but 'tis the decorum of children at school, maintained by the terror of punishment; for *there you*, as an Englishman, would be shocked at

the sight of soldiers armed amongst their fellow-citizens assembled for the purposes of pleasure and amusement, enforcing order by the point of the bayonet."

"Oh, infinitely better is it," said an old gentleman who sat on the next seat to the doctor, "that "we should have our heads pelted now and then with the rind of an orange, than that our lives should be exposed to the malice or mistake of some hot grenadier;—better too that occasionally our nerves are a little irritated by noise, than that the rude or even riotous jollity of British freedom should be changed to the servile silence or effeminate decency of an enslaved people."

"I should know that voice," said doctor Hoare, "and something of that face too; though it is some years now——"

"Bless me!" said the other, "can it be?—Do I see Jonathan Hoare?—What, have you forgotten Sam Ogilvy?"

"My dear fellow! why, this is an encounter indeed. Dear Ogilvy, I must take your hand, though in public. Here, come take this seat—(making room on the first row)—How happy I am to see you alive and hearty! Why, how many years have elapsed since we were together at the theatre?"

"Fifteen at least," said Ogilvy.

"Mr. Montagu," said the doctor, "I beg your pardon. This is Mr. Ogilvy, one of my oldest friends; and the meeting will be no less beneficial to you than it is delightful to me; that is, if Ogilvy be the same Ogilvy he was fifteen years ago, for he

was then a sort of walking guide to the literary world: eh, Sam, is it so now, eh? So, our old friend Ralph is dead at last, after having been Lord of Literature, as one may say, these fifty years. Jolly to the last, I 'm told. Many a beef-steak have we devoured together at Dolly's. Well, he did not live in vain; for he was the original designer, you must know know, Montagu, of reviews, which have essentially served the cause of literature; and though occasionally the office of a reviewer be abused, yet, like the uproariness of our gallery gods, the rudeness of these rogues must perhaps be tolerated, if we would retain the liberty of the press. But we must reserve your budget of literary news, Ogilvy, till another opportunity. This gentleman (pointing to Edward) be it known to you, is now for the first time in his life at a play.—He has been in London but a couple of days."

"I think then," said Ogilvy, "you ought for the first time to have treated him with a real play—something of Shakspeare's—something worthy the name of a drama."

"Psha, Ogilvy! I see you retain your old prejudices for the ancients, eh? Many a tough argument have you and I had on that topic. What, you still stickle for the Augustan age of literature, eh? The present times produce nothing but trash. Oh cant! cant! sheer cant, Ogilvy: I was in hopes you had left it off ere this."

"See the nonsense which will be represented on these boards to-night, and then judge if the taste of our times be not a degenerate one.—Nay, I will

leave it to the unprejudiced opinion of your young friend." -

"I have certainly," said Edward, "received great, I may say sublime, pleasure from the dramas of Shakspeare in the closet."

"But, sir," interrupted Ogilvy, "you can have no conception of the effect of those divine scenes in representation, unless you are so fortunate as to see the characters of our great bard embodied, as it were by the wonderful powers of a Kemble or a Siddons."

"But, Ogilvy," said the doctor archly, "that would not do, you know; for surely the art of acting degenerates like every thing else, and he could'nt see Garrick or Cibber, you know."

"Why, I will concede a point in favour of our great actress Siddons; I must confess, I think she never was excelled."

Here their conversation was interrupted for a few minutes, by the ascent of the musicians from beneath the stage into the orchestra, who stunned the musical ear, and shocked the taste of Edward by their slovenly execution of what is termed "the first music;" which, being performed about half an hour before the commencement of the play, is always accompanied by the discord arising from a noisy gallery, the opening and shutting of the box doors, and the vociferating voices of box-keepers announcing the names of parties coming to their places; and, therefore, is altogether disregarded by the performers as well as audience.

By this time the pit was crowded to an overflow,

as well as every part of the boxes not reserved for company.

"Are the theatres generally as well attended as this is to-night?" said Edward.

"They are scarcely ever so crowded as on the first night of a play," replied Ogilvy.

"The love of novelty, I suppose? said Edward.

"This particular species of novelty has many constant votaries," said Ogilvy; "I could now point out to you, I dare say, nearly a hundred faces, which are always to be seen at the theatre on these occasions."

"And these occasions occur now, Ogilvy," said the doctor, "at least ten times as often as they used to do twenty years ago."

"That would be all very well," said Ogilvy, "if they repaid the trouble of coming now as well as they did then."

"Again at your old trick of abusing the present age, Ogilvy. Let me tell you, modern genius is too much decried. Though I have been absent from England, I have been no stranger to English literature; and though I will own that the works of our reigning dramatists have not my unqualified approbation, yet, besides making due allowance for the difference of effect in the closet and on the stage, I have met with much to admire in point of plot, of character, of sentiment, and of genuine broad humour, if not of wit. Where, for instance, among the works of your favourite dead, will you find me a more lively, yet just delineation of nature than in the Farmer Ashfield of Morton, or the Job Thornberry

of Colman? Match me, if you can, the original eccentricity of our author of to-night, as displayed in his Vapid!"

"O monstrous! Reynolds is nothing but a downright caricaturist."

"I see, Ogilvy, you are still a closet-man. Why, my friend, if an author professes to sketch the manners of the times, and if the prominent characters and prominent follies of the day be, as they certainly are, caricatures of nature, blame the subjects if you will, but the artist who makes us laugh by his copies of them deserves praise for the happy dexterity of his pencil."

"Edward's attention was divided between listening to this dialogue, and surveying the novel spectacle of the interior of a London theatre. The blaze of beauty that now filled the circle of boxes was enchanting; and his eye roved from object to object with delight. Presently, however, one box claimed his fixed observation; and he interrupted the conversation of the two critics, by pointing out to the doctor the Beauchamp family, attended by captain Neville; and in the adjoining box the doctor observed the duchess of Belgrave and her lovely daughters.

Lady Beauchamp, whose arms were remarkable for their beauty, sat in front, reclining her head upon her hand, for the purpose of exhibiting the said beautiful and brilliantly ornamented arm. Beside her sat Neville; and next to her was a lady unknown to Edward by name, but who was one of the *petit*

souper party. Belloni and the melancholy sir Everard sat behind them.

One of the amusements of the company in the pit, to pass away the hour previous to the play, and the pauses between the acts, is to conjecture or inquire, or, if they happen to know, to point out to their neighbours, various public characters in the boxes. On the second row, close to Edward, there sat a stout short man, with a flaxen scratch, whose dress and manner by no means indicated that he was on visiting terms with dukes and duchesses, but whose universal knowledge of the persons and history of every noble family in the house, clearly evinced to Edward that he was no inconsiderable personage. He was right in his conjecture—for he was an officer of police.

It so happened, that the knowledge which this little man's head contained was copiously drawn off in the hearing of Edward, by the curiosity of a female in company with him.

"Who is that lady in the pink turban? Who is that queer-looking old gentleman with the little beaver hat on?" and many other questions of the same kind, were disposed of; when at length the inquirer, in her tour round the lower tier of boxes, came to that which contained the Beauchamp party.

"But pray tell me," said she, pointing to lady Beauchamp, "do you know who that lady with the beautiful diamond bracelets is?"

"She goes by the name of lady Beauchamp," replied the oracle. "She's lately come over from some foreign parts abroad. That chap with the

great coat on, muffled up to the chin, behind her, was a sort of monkish priest in some Roman catholickish nunnery. He goes for her uncle; but that's a hum, you must know. The young fellow next to him is sir Everard Beauchamp, the son of that foreign woman, as they say, by one of our English *barrow-nights;* but that's another flam, in my mind. Howsever, I shall soon stag who they are. I've had my doubts this week or two, ever since their connection with that noted one, on t'other side the flashy captain Neville."

"And who is she?"

"She?—Why, that 's the noted lady ——, she 's the first of female gamblers; and her husband 's one of the oldest swindlers we have to look after."

"La!" said the lady, "and to have the impudence to show her face in public! And to be sure, as the saying is, you may know folks by the company they keep; and so, I dare say that lady Beauchamp is as great a gambler as she?"

"That 's not the worst.—But I shall soon twig her ladyship, if lady she be. I 've a little bit of a trap for her, and the flashy spark beside her. I shall soon see what makes him take her in tow; for she, nor her uncle, nor the young one neither, would ever have been noticed, even by your doubtful ones, if he had not contrived it."

"And what is he then?"

"He?—Why, he is one of your cheap-living boys. He has n't a penny of fortune; and yet there is n't never a rout, nor *grand-to-do* any where, but somehow or other his nose is to be seen there. He hires

a flashy carriage by the year, and contrives to pay a few servants; and he has a knack of worming himself into the confidence of your younker sprigs of quality; and under pretence of helping them out of their hobbles and scrapes, he helps the flats out of their Spanish, which keeps him in pocket-money."

Hitherto the ears of Edward had lost no word. He suffered the doctor and his friend to chat upon old affairs; till the ringing of the bell summoned the re-appearance of the musicians in the orchestra, who had not played three bars ere the curtain drew up, and Mr. Murray entered to speak the prologue. That judicious performer was received with a boisterous applause, which at once denoted the unanimous good humour of the audience, and foretold the success of the piece. Edward's attention during the representation of the comedy was riveted to the stage: the interesting manner of Kemble, in the character of a rustic, though not within the general line of his performances, gave a stamp of reality to the scene; the whimsicality of Fawcett enlivened it; and the talents of the performers in general were so laudably exerted to embody the design of the author, that the novice entered with all the enthusiasm of his nature into the delusion of the drama. The plot, which turned on the substitution of a child stolen from its parents for another which had died, came so home to his own situation, that he paid the tribute of his tears as well as his smiles to the powers of the author.

Between the acts, however, instead of offering to his companions any remarks himself, or attending

to their critical observations, his ear took a direction towards the little man in the flaxen scratch, whose sharp eye flew round the theatre with a hawk-like swiftness.

Nothing further dropped from the lips of this gentleman, which challenged particular attention, until the end of the fourth act, when his companion said, loud enough to be heard by Edward,

"La!—How familiar the duchess of Belgrave talks to that there captain!"

"Yes—so she does;" said the other. "Why, queer me, how 's that? They used to be at daggers drawn. Who 's that youngster he is introducing to her and her daughter?" continued he, rubbing his eye-glass with the corner of his cravat. "Oh, by the lord Harry, I see—Why, that there 's the son and heir of this here monstrous rich family that's to cut 'em all out this season—that 's lord Barton—I twigged him this morning going into lord H——'s office, as I was a-waiting in the lobby for the Russian ambassador, about a bit of swindling business. Now, if I ha'n't up to the gig at once, I 'm a raw one. Have n't you read in the newspapers a good deal about one Mr. *Mowntagu?*"

Edward trembled.

"What, about a young man that was found when a baby, and brought up by lord Roseville! and how he grew up to be so handsome and clever, and saved the life of a beautiful young lady!—Oh, yes, and a very *pathetical* story it was: but I did n't know it was true."

Edward supported himself by grasping the iron spikes that are placed to prevent intrusion into the orchestra.

"O yes, it 's true enough; and I now begin to smell a rat. Master Neville thinks himself d——d clever; but he won't diddle me so easily as he thinks for. I see now what Jasper, his footman, was tramping so late last night to the newspaper-office about. Poor duchess of Belgrave! what a pity she should be such a flat! Now will that fellow Neville make her believe that he has been the means of introducing her grace and her daughters to the rich Roseville family; when I saw her own son driving lord Barton and Big Jacky, the boxer, down Pall Mall this very morning. You see that 's the way he goes on. Why, I had it from Saunders, his own valet, that he knew nothing at all of these Beauchamp people till just as they left some outlandish place abroad, when he undertook to get 'em into the first company here. Old Nick stood his friend; and in the same packet they sailed to England in, there came over the earl of Roseville and family. He soon learnt that the earl wanted the Beauchamp estate in the North, which joins his own; and he put his wits to work, and got the thing agreed to in a crack. Transit the auctioneer and he galloped down to the North, fixed a price, and now he makes both families believe that he has done them the greatest favour in the world by introducing them to each other. Saunders told me this morning, that when they went down the last time to Cumberland, they found this *Mowntagu* such a favourite with lord Roseville,

that it is whispered he must be a bit of a by-blow. However that is, Neville had art enough to get the care of him, brings him up to London, takes him to Beauchamp's last night, and whips off Jasper to get it in the papers, that he and this Mowntagu are arrived together."

"And what will he make of that?"

"Oh, we who sees high life, Kitty, is up to that gossip. Why, child, this is the go—This Roseville family will be the very tippy all the winter; and there is not a wife or daughter of a duke or lord in London, but what would give their little finger to be at their *grand-to-dos*. Why, I 'm engaged already at ten guineas a-night to go whenever I 'm wanted; except when on royal duty, you know;—dam'me, I will sarve my king first, lose what I will by it. Now, if that flashy captain can make the town believe that he has influence with the Roseville family, he may lay all London under contribution, and that 's what he 's after; but he can't diddle me."

The curtain now drew up to the last act of the play, which concluded amidst shouts of approbation and applause.

The hour being late, as is usual on the night of a first representation, Edward and his companions quitted the theatre as soon as the epilogue had been delivered.

As they made their way out, the doctor took an opportunity to whisper in the ear of Edward, that he had overheard a considerable part of the conver-

sation to which he had been listening; "but of that," said he, "more anon."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Ogilvy, as he was tying a silk handkerchief round his neck in the passage of the pit, "I dare say you have been amused."

"Yes, indeed, sir," said Edward; "I could not have imagined such a perfect effect was to be produced by the dramatic art."

"Ah, sir!" replied Ogilvy; "but what is this jumble of jokes, and tricks, and sentiment, to the regular productions of the old school?—Trash, sir —trash!"

"I cannot speak from comparison, sir," said Edward, "but if I may deliver an opinion from the effect which this comedy has produced upon my mind, I must pronounce it an excellent one. I may have laughed, perhaps, at a joke, and I may have sighed at situations or sentiments, which may be condemned by the artificial rules of cold criticism; but you will pardon me if I did not check the irritation which the former occasioned, or resist the feelings which the latter excited, when you recollect that this is the first dramatic representation I have beheld. In time, sir, I doubt not I shall lose the pleasure of a spectator in the fastidiousness of a critic!"

"Well done my young advocate," said the doctor.

They were now in Bow street, where a scene which makes no impression upon the frequenters of a theatre filled Edward with wonder. The night was dark, and in addition to the torches of a score of bare-footed little wretches, whose infant voices

usually scream,—"Light, your honour—Want a coach your honour?—Coach unhired,"—on this occasion a hundred flambeaux, from powdered footmen, added to the blaze. The crashing of wheels, the trampling of horses, the oaths and exclamations of coachmen, and the voices of footmen bawling for the different carriages, altogether formed a spectacle as interesting in its kind to the observant mind of Edward, as the cause and origin of the confusion.

Mr. Ogilvy was rather infirm; Dr. Hoare had not a perfect recollection of the avenues, and Edward was totally a stranger: they therefore were impelled backwards and forwards by the crowd, until at length they found themselves thrust into the outer lobby of the boxes, where a long vista of servants was planted, through which the company walked to their carriages as they drew up. As a place of safety, the doctor and Mr. Ogilvy retreated behind this liveried alley, until the crowd should disperse, and Edward, of course, remained with them. In a minute after they had taken their station a person at the door vociferated, "The duchess of Belgrave's carriage stops the way." The echo was repeated from staircase to staircase, till the house rung with "The duchess of Belgrave's carriage stops the way."

"O don't be after fatiguing your precious lungs now," said a tall brawny-shouldered fellow, in white and silver livery: "my lady duchess is one of the slowest creatures in a hurry you ever fell foul of."

When the former echo had ceased, a new one

commenced from the interior, and proceeded to the street, of—"Captain Neville's servants!—Lady Beauchamp's servants!—Captain Neville's servants! —Lady Beauchamp's servants!"

Edward was all observation. Presently one of the loveliest young women imaginable appeared leaning her hand on the arm of lord Barton: it was lady Susan, the eldest daughter of the duchess. They were followed by captain Neville, with the duchess herself on one arm and lady Caroline on the other.

"Hartley behaves ill in disappointing us," said the duchess: "it distresses me to give you so much trouble, my lord."

"Hartley has laid me under everlasting obligations to him, by affording me this happiness," said lord Barton.

"So, so, so!" said doctor Hoare: "the youth proceeds with rapid strides, however: well done, Neville!"

"There is not a peer in all Christendom but would envy our lot, madam," said Neville to the duchess, "and with reason, happy fellows as we are!"

"Is it the coach, Patrick?" said the duchess to the brawny footman.

"Yes sure, your grace, and it is the coach."

"Is my chariot up?" said the captain to his servant.

"Next to the duchess of Belgrave's sir."

"To Belgrave House, then."

Away drove the two vehicles.

The next groupe that made its appearance consisted of Belloni, with sir Everard and lady Beauchamp.

Vexation and disappointment sat upon the brow of the dowager; she bit her lip, she flirted her fan as she moved along. Just as they passed the concealed trio, Jerry arrived to say the carriage waited.

"Are you sure," said her ladyship, "that lord Roseville's people told you Mr. Montagu and Dr. Hoare were at this theatre?"

"Yes, my lady: and besides, I saw them myself in the pit."

"Gracious Heaven!—in the pit?" said her ladyship.

"In the pit!" echoed Belloni with a shrug of the shoulders and a grin. "I told you," added he in a lower, yet audible, tone, "he would slip through your fingers, if once the grave doctor arrived."

"Let Neville look to it: I will not be duped with impunity," said her ladyship as they quitted the lobby.

"What does all this mean?" said Edward.

"It means mischief," said the doctor; "but we must prevent it: thanks to this friendly screen, we have overheard a little of the plot, and we must act accordingly."

The crowd had by this time dispersed, and they sallied forth from their retreat: Edward and the doctor returned to Roseville House, where the critic Ogilvy promised to pay them an early visit.

END OF VOL. I.